THE MEMOIRS

of

MONSIGNOR WILLIAM FRANCIS O'BRIEN

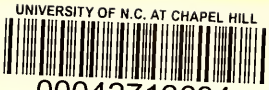
C282
013m

THE LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
NORTH CAROLINA

THE COLLECTION OF
NORTH CAROLINIANA
PRESENTED BY

William D. Carmichael

C282
013m



This book must not be taken from the Library building.

Form No. 471

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Institute of Museum and Library Services, under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act, administered by the State Library of North Carolina, a division of Cultural Resources

http://archive.org/details/memoirsofmonsign00obri

THE MEMOIRS OF MONSIGNOR WILLIAM FRANCIS O'BRIEN

Nihil Obstat:

GEORGE E. LYNCH
Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:

✠ VINCENT S. WATERS, D.D.
Bishop of Raleigh

August 1958

In making any of the statements contained in this volume the writer does not presume to judge any matters that should be decided by the authority of the Apostolic See.

Wm. F. O'Brien

THE MEMOIRS

of

MONSIGNOR WILLIAM FRANCIS O'BRIEN

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

1958

First Printing, November 1958

Limited to 1000 copies of which this is

Copy No. 165

To

W. D. Carmichael, Jr. My friend
of a life time, who I received into Holy Mother
Church in 1940. Wishing you Gods choicest
blessings and graces

Msgr. Wm. F. O'Brien

Christmas 1958

PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA BY THE
CHRISTIAN PRINTING COMPANY, DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

DEDICATION

These "Memoirs" are dedicated to the

Most Reverend Bishop Vincent Stanislaus Waters, D.D.
Bishop of Raleigh, North Carolina,

who is devoted to the Apostolate of promoting, training, and fostering vocations of young men to be missionary priests, "other Christs," for the conversion of North Carolina.

42370

PREFACE

A FEW MONTHS after the Co-founders of the Maryknoll American Foreign Missionary Society, Bishop James Anthony Walsh of the Archdiocese of Boston and Thomas Frederick Price of the Vicariate of North Carolina, received the hearty approval and papal blessing of Pius X, for the establishment of the American Foreign Missionary Society, I made a visit to the Maryknoll Founders' headquarters, then temporarily located in Hawthorne, New York. On the occasion of that visit, Father Price, who was my elder associate on the non-Catholic North Carolina missions, lost no time in inviting me to speak to the first class, made up of Maryknoll students from several states, as future prospective missionaries of foreign lands. The future Bishop Ford, a martyr in China, was a member of that class. In my informal talk, to that interesting and distinguished class, I emphasized the peculiar fact that the missionary of non-Catholics in North Carolina seldom realized any results of his work. In his comments, Father Price said to the class that it was a fact that a North Carolina missionary seldom realized, humanly speaking, any immediate results of his activity, but that I had realized some results, but not too much, as I had established a school. After the class time was over, one of the students came to me and said: "Father, China for me." "Yes, you know I am naturally interested in your desire to be a missionary in China, but would you mind telling me the basic reason, humanly speaking, why you wish to go to China?" Without hesitation, he said: "Father I wish to go to China to see some results in my work." A second student came to me and said: "Father, I do not see why we have to go to China when there are such places as you have described, in the United States." In other words, the conclusion can be drawn that sacrificing mission work is needed in the whole universal vineyard of Christ in the wide-world. As ideal missions exist for zealous and sacrificing priests, abroad, so there are ideal missions existing for zealous and sacrificing priests at home. Missionary work is missionary work, whether in foreign lands or home lands. "The harvest is ripe, but the laborers are few, pray ye, the Lord of the harvest that He sends laborers into His Vineyard," whether in foreign lands or at our very doors.

Bishop John England was consecrated as the first Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1820. One of the students, who had finished his Classical, philosophical, and theological studies

in the Seminary, in the days of Bishop England, who had known Bishop England and had heard him preach and lecture, was Dr. Jeremiah O'Connell, the author of "Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia." I have seen and heard Dr. O'Connell tell of his missionary experiences in the Carolinas five years before he died in 1894, at Belmont Abbey, the first year I was a student as a Seminarian there. For this reason, I feel and know that I am a link with the historic past; and as a laborer in the former Vicariate, and now the diocese of Raleigh, I would like to be filled with deep gratitude to God for His sustaining me in this life for over these past sixty years as a priest. When I came into the state about the first of May, 1888, I was fifteen years of age, and at that time the Vicariate of North Carolina was under the jurisdiction of Bishop Henry P. Northrup, the Bishop of the Mother See of Charleston, South Carolina. Bishop Haid was consecrated as Titular Bishop of Messene, Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina and Abbot-Ordinary of Belmont Abbey, North Carolina, in July 1888.

Having been born in Washington, D. C., I have now been living in North Carolina for over seventy years, as the state of my choice, as a citizen and especially as a citizen of Durham, North Carolina, known widely as the "Friendly City," for fifty-one years.

May 5, 1958—Feast of St. Pius V who instituted the Feast of Our Lady of Victory which has been changed to the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary and is celebrated on October 7th.

MSGR. WM. F. O'BRIEN
Pastor Emeritus of the Church of the Immaculate Conception
Durham, N. C.

MEMOIRS OF RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR WILLIAM FRANCIS O'BRIEN

In his book, published in 1860, on the "Memoir of the O'Briens," Mr. John Donohue has ably traced the O'Brien family from a very early period in Irish history. Passing over his interesting lineage of the O'Brien family from the early centuries, I begin briefly, if not somewhat abruptly, the ancient lineage of the family from the eleventh century, when Brian Boroimhe, the king and warrior lived, who was and is the common ancestor of the O'Briens. It was from his time that the letter *O* was put before the *B* in the name, so that his descendants would be known as the sons of the Brian or Brien family.

There are many branches of the O'Brien family. There are the County Tipperary O'Briens, the County Clare, the County Wexford, the County Limerick and other counties in Ireland; and in addition, there are the O'Briens of Aran Islands, the Spanish, the French and the Dutch O'Briens. Not forgetting the thousands upon thousands of the Brian Boroimhe descendants in Ireland and other lands, I am, naturally, interested in the O'Brien family of Tipperary County, as that is the home of my ancestry. It is an historical fact that Brian Boroimhe made Tipperary County his headquarters in successfully driving the Danes out of Ireland and it is an historical fact that he built one of his circular fortresses in the ancient town of Cahir, Tipperary County, Ireland, the home of my grandmother, Catherine O'Brien, and the ancestral home of my father. Speaking to the great scholar and orator, Archbishop Ryan of Philadelphia, of happy memory, over fifty years ago, who was born in Thurles, Tipperary County, I made it known that my ancestors were born in Cahir, Tipperary. "Oh," he said, "the town of Cahir was the home of the Kings."

It is interesting to read what John Burke had to say of the O'Briens lineage: "The house of Massini, Ursini, Frougipani, Colona, etc., at Rome, anteceding perhaps any in France, Spain and Germany; but after strict investigation and poising the facts fairly, in the balance of historical criticism, few of the Continental nobility will be found to be superior in origin, if parallel, to the O'Briens whose progenitors were sovereign princes on the arrival of the English in 1172. No epoch," continues Mr. Burke, "is better attested than the reign of Brian Boroimhe, the conqueror of the Danes in the decisive battle of Clontarf on the 23rd of April in 1014. The monarch was coeval with Hugo Capet which without further retrogression would place his descendants in a coincident line with the

royal houses of Europe of the greatest antiquity—even with the Bourbons, incontestably the oldest of all. Brian's posterity numerously and unquestionably exist as do the representatives of the other Irish princes whose claims are as demonstrable by reference to authenticated testimony as any historical event of the era."

Brian Boroimhe is said to have been a very religious man. It is said of him, by historians, that on the eve of the battle of Clontarf, he said to his army, "What proves to be providential in our favor is, that we shall take full revenge of the enemy for his constant acts of treachery and the profanation of so many churches, the Friday in Holy Week on which Jesus Christ suffered an ignominious death for our redemption, Who will undoubtedly be present with us, as a just avenger of His holy religion and laws." With these last words, he showed them his crucifix, which he held in his left hand and sword in his right, indicating thereby, that he was willing to sacrifice his life in the assertion of so just, so honorable a cause.

About the year 1120, one of the sons of Brian built and founded St. Peter's Abbey at Ratisbon, Germany. Another son founded Holy Cross Abbey near Thurles, Tipperary County, in 1182. In the twelfth century, other sons built cities, castles and royal seats, such as Cahir Castle, the ancient seat of the Lords Cahir of Cahir.

My grandfather, John Murphy, left Ireland with six of his sons, as master stonemasons in 1833, to work on the high buildings in New York, after a devastating fire there in that city. My father, being the youngest of seven sons, was left with his mother at home in Cahir, as he was only three years of age. Living with his mother until he was sixteen years of age, while his father and older brothers were living in America, he took his mother's name, O'Brien. He was known as Joseph O'Brien. It was not too uncommon, in Ireland, for children to be given the names of both parents, such as Murray-Fitzgerald, Murphy-O'Brien or O'Brien-Murphy.

My father, Joseph O'Brien, was born in the ancient town of Cahir, Tipperary County, Ireland, on the 7th of October, the Feast of the Holy Rosary, in the year 1830. He often spoke of his mother in endearing and loving terms and how she was cared for by an ample supply of money sent to her from America, by his father. I was told by a cousin of my father, Captain Larry O'Brien, a Civil War veteran, who was in the contracting business in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1899, that my grandfather and his father left New York, in 1855, and built St. John's church in New Haven and then went to Meridan, Connecticut, and built the Meridan House. It was customary for contractors in the North, in the early 60's, during the wintery weather, to go South in the interest of their business. My grandfather went to Savannah, Georgia,

during a winter about the year 1860 and died there during the War Between the States in the Confederate Army, and another son or brother of my father, called to see my father in Washington, D. C., to arrange to go and settle in Lexington, Kentucky. Passing through Lexington, Kentucky, on the train from Arkansas to North Carolina, in 1888, he learned that my father's brother was living there, but unfortunately I have never seen him or any of his family as he did not write of his whereabouts since he took up residence there.

My father left Ireland for England when he was sixteen years of age. He was his mother's last and only son at home. I can never forget the impression he made on my mind, when he described for the first time the leave-taking from his beloved mother who he was never to see again in this life. Scenes like this were common in Ireland in 1847, and in the famine years that followed. Many of the sons of Eire were chosen at this time of heart-break, loneliness, and intense mental suffering, to come to America to carry the light of Faith, and keep the light of Faith burning in the land of freedom and wonderful opportunity. As a group, they had a mission, and the mission, under God, was carried out. Had the cross of the famine years not happened in Ireland, thousands of sons, as priests, would not have stood before the Altar in the past and thousands would not be standing before the Altar today. Praise be to God, Who has designed in His all-wise and foreseeing providence that: Ireland was to be and is today a nation on Calvary!

The centuries of the traditions of the O'Briens, who have done so much for the perpetuation of the Church in Ireland, is kept up by their sons and close kindred in the United States. According to the statistics in the *Catholic Directory*, published by Kennedy and Sons in New York City, the O'Briens, Kellys, Murphys and Kennedys lead all the rest of the names of the priests of Celtic origin of the thousands listed in the roster of the United States. There are about three hundred and fifty names of the Murphys, two hundred and fifty names of the O'Briens, about two hundred fifty Kellys and more than a hundred Kennedys. The O'Briens, Murphys and Kennedys are closely related in Cahir, Ireland.

My father left England for New York in 1855. He did not choose to work on the high buildings in New York with his older brothers; instead, he walked from New York City to Paterson, New Jersey, with only fifty cents in his pocket, where he enlisted in the United States Army. His love as a young cavalry soldier in the English Army was the urge that decided him to become a cavalry man in the United States Army, before the Custer massacre and

six years before the War Between the States broke out. He fought through the War and was wounded in the battle of Gettysburg. After the War, he was an employee in the War Department.

My mother, Mary Conway, was born in Cahirciveen, County Kerry, Ireland, in 1838. Looking up the old Kerry records in Cahirciveen, on a visit there in 1932, I found authoritative mention that King James I, as far back as 1587, gave over to the Conways the castle of Killarghan, situated about four miles north of Cahirciveen. In the family history, Elizabeth Conway is given as the great grandmother of Daniel O'Connell, the national Liberator. The Cahirciveen people revere the memory of Michael Conway, the brother of my mother, for being instrumental in saving the lives of many of his townsmen, in his stubborn and effective opposition to English rule. The families of the Conways and O'Connells are interrelated in Cahirciveen. A cousin of Daniel O'Connell by name and direct descendant of the great Irish orator and national Liberator, considered it an honor to take me to all points of interest in the beautiful and historic old town.

At the present time there is a beautiful Presentation Convent built over the spot where my mother was born. One of the nuns told me that she loved Michael Conway when she was a child because he picked her up and put her on his lap. Another nun took me into the room where my mother went to school and then hastened to take me to the grave of the Rev. Superior, a cousin of Bishop Egan of Kerry, who taught my mother. And still another nun spoke of the reception that Daniel O'Connell gave them when they opened their Convent in the city. One of the arts the Presentation Sisters taught their pupils in Ireland, was all kinds of fancy needlework. My mother was proficient in this art. Coming to New York in the early 60's, she lived with her older sister, Hannah, who conducted a fashionable modiste shop. She was soon capable of managing the shop with her sister. One of the dependable and loyal patrons was Mrs. Stanton, the wife of the Secretary of War in the Lincoln administration. Mrs. Stanton persuaded my mother to go to Washington with her to keep her wardrobe in quality and finish as the state of her position in society required. As my father's duty was to contact Secretary Stanton daily as a member of the War Department, it was there that he fortunately met my mother. A few months after the first acquaintance of my father and mother, they were married in old St. Matthews Church in Washington, D. C., in 1866, by Dr. White. The two outstanding priests recognized by the clergy at that time for their learning in the South, were Dr. White of Washington and Baltimore and Dr. Corcoran of Charleston, S. C.

I was born on Capital Hill opposite the present Congressional Library, October 18, 1872—the Feast of St. Luke, the Evangelist. The buildings on that street have long since been torn down to make way for the present buildings now there. In 1873, my father was transferred by the Government from Washington to Baltimore. In 1876 my mother died in Baltimore, and the Requiem Mass was said at St. Joseph's Passionist Monastery on the old Frederick Road and her body was interred in Bonnie Brae Cemetery, now called the Cathedral Cemetery. I well remember her general appearance and was inconsolable at the time of her death, as a devoted child naturally would be. Shortly after my ordination in 1898, I visited the Passionist Monastery in Baltimore and an old Brother, who remembered my mother, told me how I missed my mother and that I wept for a long time. I paid visits to her grave a number of times. I felt an urge to visit her grave during the year of my Golden Jubilee, 1948, and also on the 12th of September, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, 1951. My last visit was in 1955, on the return from a pilgrimage to St. Anne-de-Beaupre. As long as our merciful God gives me strength to travel, I will make visits to her grave when the opportunities present themselves.

In 1883, my father was sent by the Government from Baltimore to Arkansas, where I went for the first time to a Public School. There were only about fifty Catholics in town at that time. Priests of the Passionist Congregation from St. Louis, Missouri, and New Orleans, La., came to the mission once a month. I often walked three miles to the Church. All my associates in that town were non-Catholics and were absolutely ignorant of the teachings of the Church. The whole environment was Protestant. In 1888, my father was transferred to New Bern, North Carolina. There were only about seventy-five or eighty Catholics in New Bern at that time. Socially, they seemed to have a common bond between them. I felt at home among them and was reminded of the Catholics of Baltimore, of my earlier association. When my father was transferred from Baltimore to Fayetteville, Arkansas, he left my two sisters in Baltimore at school while my brother Joseph and I went to be with him in Arkansas. When he was transferred to New Bern, my two sisters, Catherine Agnes and Mary Loretta, came from Baltimore to New Bern to make up our household. The oldest of the four children married a Mr. Williams of Washington, D. C. She lived with me for twenty-one years until her recent death at the age of ninety-one. The second child, Joseph, died in New Bern at the age of twenty-one, in 1890. The writer of these memoirs was the third child and is in his eighty-fifth year. The fourth child,

Mary Loretta, kept house for me in Fayetteville, North Carolina. She died during Holy Week in 1900 at the age of twenty-four, and is buried in Fayetteville, North Carolina.

When Bishop John England was appointed the first bishop of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1820, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia were included in the extensive diocese of Charleston. Dr. Guilday, in his history of the life of John England, writes, that in the year 1821, "New Bern, North Carolina, the home of Judge William Gaston, was a center of refinement and elegance. It was here that the Governor resided in 1821, and the little town was free from the curse and rigid Puritanism of other communities of the Province." In the book of the *Register of Catholic Marriages,* kept in St. Paul's Rectory, it is recorded that Bishop England, in February 1832, officiated at the marriage ceremony between Judge Mathias Manly and Hannah A. Gaston, the daughter of Judge William Gaston. The children of Judge Manly and Hannah Gaston, whom I have seen and spoken to, were well past middle age in 1888. They were highly cultured and respected in the community. The one member of the family I came in contact with was the Honorable Mathias Manly, Jr., who was Mayor of the city. The little congregation of about seventy-five members in all, including children and infants, looked up to the Manly family with respect, admiration and laudable pride as leading members of their Faith and who had the love of their Church at heart. It was natural that the members of the little congregation, from time to time in their conversations would speak about incidents in the lives of Judge Gaston and the Manly family. The spirit of Judge Gaston, as a distinguished Catholic citizen, one of the founders, and most generous contributor to the Church was discernable as a wholesome Catholic influence on the little congregation in 1888, when I came to live in New Bern between the years of 1888 and 1892.

It was in 1888 when I first saw Father Price. He was not yet ordained two years. I was fifteen years old at the time. My first impression of him was that he was a very amiable, quiet, gentle and holy man. He was devoted to the missions which he attended regularly within three hundred square miles, with New Bern as headquarters. Whenever he would make a visit to a family outside the city limits or make a sick call, he always said the rosary with the Catholic boy driving him in the buggy belonging to the boy's parents. I recall very well driving him around the city to locate a place for a colored school. I can never forget a sermon he preached one Sunday morning on sanctifying grace. To me, he

was the perfect embodiment of sanctifying grace. I never lost the exalted opinion I had of him up to the last time I saw him, which was about the year 1917 when his whole thought was to lead the first band of Maryknoll missionaries to China. There was some question among clergymen about the wisdom of Father Price going to China, due to his age. Knowing this, Father Price made a manifestation to Cardinal Hayes, as Maryknoll's Seminary was in the Cardinal's New York Diocese. After listening intently and imperturbably to Father Price, the Cardinal said to him, "Father Price, I think you ought to go to China, having the burning thoughts you have to go."

Although I had a deep reverence for the solid virtue and beautiful life that Father Price lived, yet humanly speaking, I was drawn by the "Chords of Adam" to his assistant, Father Charles E. Burns, a native of Milford, Connecticut. Father Burns seemed to have given himself wholly to the colored people of the city. He seemed to have taken a personal interest in me and lost no time in persuading my father to send me to Belmont College, as a prospective candidate for the priesthood. While the thought came to me very early as a little boy to be a priest, yet I thought now, at the age of sixteen, it was well nigh impossible. Yet Father Burns seemed to believe I had a vocation to the priesthood. "Would you like to be a priest?" he asked. Having in mind the long years of study and did I have sufficient talent and sufficient grace, when I was thinking of searching for a job posed for me a question. "Well," I replied, "if I thought I would make a successful priest, I would be glad to be one." "You know, Will, you cannot be a priest in weeks, months or even a few years. It takes persistent plodding." "You see my father, and if the necessary arrangements can be made, I will go to Belmont and make a trial." In the fall of 1889 Father Julius, the Director of the College, gave a retreat to the students. I was not preparing to make the retreat and was not too busy studying as a student. My mind was on athletics. I was a strong muscular boy at sixteen and could successfully hold out a fifty-pound cannon ball, with some effort. I was not vicious, nor in any sense in opposition to anything that was spiritually or morally good; but I doubted if the good priest would do me any good owing to the state of my soul, as I was shy and not without shame in thought. Oh! but the good priest did get me. He hit me like lightning. To me it was heavenly grace given by the mercy of God. All my shyness and shame were no more. I could hardly wait patiently for the hour to come to make a general confession to him. From that time I had a desire to become a priest in the Vicariate of North Carolina.

Father Burns generally kept a congenial boy with him and supported him as a companion. He loved a good horse. His uncle in Milford, Connecticut, kept blooded race horses in his livery stable and gave one to Father Burns, named Shamrock, who had won several races on the Kentucky race tracks. It was a delight to ride with Father Burns behind his famous steed, Shamrock. Father Burns died in my early priesthood while going on a sick call during a blizzard in a Western diocese. If there is one conviction in my soul, it is the sacred truth of Our Lord, when He reminds the candidates preparing for the priesthood, "that you have not chosen Me, but that I have chosen you, that you go forth and bring forth fruit and that your fruit shall remain." I fully realize that I have not chosen God first, but that He has chosen me as a priest.

CHAPTER II

In September 1889, I was received and welcomed as a student to St. Mary's College, Belmont, North Carolina, by Father Julius, the Director of the College. I cannot say that I made the closest application to my studies in my college years. Often, during the study periods in my commercial and classical studies, I read a number of books. Among them were the works of Washington Irving, read preferably for his graceful and easy style and for his love for Spanish chivalry. I was interested in the early struggles and sacrifices of the pioneer missionary priests in the state. I read Dr. Jeremiah O'Connell's "History of Catholicity in the Carolinas and Georgia." I was looked upon by fellow-students as a good athlete rather than a studious individual, though I did receive distinction in elocution and composition.

In 1892 my father was transferred by the government from New Bern to Staunton, Virginia, where I spent seven summer vacation months, but continued as a student and a seminarian at Belmont. The two families that I well remember in Staunton, sixty-five years ago and who afterwards moved to Raleigh, N. C., were the Fallon and Whooley families. Rosalie Whooley, who I knew as a little girl in Staunton, married Frank Fallon who started the Fallon Florist business in Raleigh. The Fallons gave the property to the Church on which the school, church, convent and rectory, dedicated to Our Lady of Lourdes is built. Mrs. Fallon is now living in Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Raleigh.

During my last year in college, in the spring of 1894, I well remember an event that made a lasting impression on me. It was the coming of Cardinal Gibbons from Baltimore, to dedicate the new Cathedral Abbey Church. I had seen him, as a little boy in Baltimore before he was created Cardinal in 1886, and my mind was filled with pleasant thoughts of seeing the Archbishop, now a Cardinal, who confirmed me in Baltimore before I left the city for Fayetteville, Arkansas, in 1885. A great number of the Baltimore clergy came with him. There were also Bishops and Abbots from other diocese and monasteries as well as most all the clergy from South Carolina, and all the clergy from the Vicariate of North Carolina. The festive occasion has seldom been equaled, if at any time, in North Carolina even to this day as an impressive and brilliant array of Bishops, Abbots, Prelates and Priests gathered together in the Sanctuary during the solemn Pontifical High Mass. It was awe-inspiring especially to the students from non-Catholic areas. The liturgical splendor and grandeur of the church ceremonies was a privilege to them, in the struggle to keep and to

practice their religion, amidst an atmosphere foreign and adverse to the profession of their holy faith. Naturally it was a joy to me, who had last seen the Cardinal when a little boy but now in my twenty-one and six months of age, in the year 1894 when the Cardinal was sixty years of age, walking lightly, with a natural air of dignity, surrounded by bishops, mitered abbots, prelates and priests, to the altar rail, bowing to the right and left before the breathless, admiring, expectant and vast Congregation. It was like a scene of splendor of the gathering of the hierachy in a grand Cathedral, of an important event, of the historical past. The voice of the Cardinal was like the sound of a silver bell. The sermon was full of unction, simple and inspiring, and filled with apostolic thought. It was a masterpiece, elegant in expression and delivered with distinct enunciation. I well remember the Cardinal referring to the massive buildings that were built in the land he remembered as a wilderness in years past when he was vicar-apostolic in North Carolina. Yet as much as he admired the buildings of the monastery, the abbey cathedral and the college, he emphasized that they were but material, merely brick and mortar and subject to decay. What we really need today, were men and women, apostolic men and women to go forth to instruct the ignorant, bringing Christian culture and true civilization to them in the vast field, ripe for the harvest, "now sitting in the shadow of death."

When I entered the Seminary in 1894, Bishop Haid took a special interest in my philosophical and theological studies. In after years he recognized an editorial in Father Price's *Truth Magazine,* published at Nazareth, as a theological case written out by me during one of his years as Professor of Moral Theology. Dr. Felix, prior of the monastery, was my professor in Dogmatic Theology. Coming to the class, in my last year as a seminarian, on the 25th of March, the Feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, he suddenly said, sincerely and deliberately out loud before the class, "Domine O'Brien, I congratulate you on your first step to the priesthood." I had received all the Minor Orders early that morning in the Bishop's Chapel. It is generally customary for seminarians to receive the Minor Orders two years before Ordination, but as I was the lone Seminarian, I did not receive the Minor and Major Orders until the last year. I was ordained subdeacon on June 10th; deacon, June 11th, and priesthood, June 12th, 1898. There were four of us ordained together, the clerics of the Benedictine Order and myself, as a secular priest. I was the first priest sent out, as a student at Belmont Abbey, who went through the College, starting in their Commercial, through their Classical, then through their Seminary and to the Priesthood. I remember the

good Bishop saying, to the Congregation from the Altar in the Cathedral Abbey Church at the Ordination service, "that he could foresee the sacrifice and privation that a priest would have in the Vicariate of North Carolina, owing to the few and widely scattered Catholics, and of necessity the struggle against poverty owing to the situation as it is in the Vicariate." If a young priest dreamed of getting a salary at that time, he would have been a misfit in the Vicariate. Of necessity to be happy, his only choice would be that he was thankful to God that he was chosen to be a missionary priest.

When I came to the state in 1888, there were only 2500 Catholics. In the year of my Ordination, there 3800 Catholics and only five secular priests laboring in the state. They were Father Thomas Frederick Price, missionary; Father Christopher Denman, pastor at Wilmington; Father Peter Marion of Asheville; Father Patrick Quinn, pastor of Newton Grove and Goldsboro; and Father Thomas Griffin, of Raleigh. Father Price, the oldest ordained of the other four priests, was twelve years my senior, who made up the sixth priest of the Vicariate. These five brother priests have long since gone to their reward. On June 12th, 1957, I will have labored in the Vicariate and Diocese of Raleigh, fifty-nine years.

My first appointment in 1898 was to be assistant at St. Paul's white church and pastor of St. Joseph's colored church in New Bern. Father Edward Myer, a priest of the Order of St. Benedict, was pastor of St. Paul's Church that year. I knew Father Edward when he was a cleric at Belmont and when he succeeded Father Julius as Director of the Dramatic Society of St. Mary's College. It was the first time, if not the only time, that a Religious and Secular priest worked together in the Vicariate.

St. Joseph's Church was started by Father Charles E. Burns not long after I had arrived in New Bern as a boy of fifteen years. On leaving for Belmont, Father Burns asked me if I was ordained would I take care of the colored church in New Bern. My reply was, if the Bishop appointed me to take care of the colored congregation, I would gladly do so. And singularly enough, Bishop Haid did appoint me to take care of that very Congregation even though Father Burns in after-years died in a Western diocese. The land on which St. Joseph's Church was first built was given by Congressman O'Hara and Thomas McCarthy. Mr. McCarthy was the father of a former Mayor of the City and was a schoolmate of mine. Congressman O'Hara was a former colored official of the Freedom's Bureau in Washington. He was born in the Virgin Islands and was elected to Congress shortly after the War Between the States. My father knew him in Washington and renewed his acquaintance with him when he came to New Bern. Congressman

O'Hara, whom I knew as a boy, died shortly before I came to New Bern as pastor of St. Joseph's Church. His widow, Mrs. O'Hara, taught the colored children in school and I would leave St. Paul's white church every morning during the week to teach them catechism. Mr. and Mrs. O'Hara's son become a lawyer, and organized the first colored Catholic League in the state, to bring to their brethren who were not baptized Catholics the knowledge of our holy Faith. During my pastorate of St. Joseph's the pastor of St. Paul's Church became seriously sick and was taken to a hospital in Richmond, and in consequence it fell to my lot, that in addition to my work at St. Joseph's I became the acting Pastor of St. Paul's Church.

When I was in the seminary at Belmont, I read a most interesting account of three little girls who built St. Ann's Church at Edenton, N. C., in 1858. I was immediately possessed with a longing to go on that mission. In the fall of 1898, I took a boat on the old Clyde Line for Edenton. I invested all the money I had in a return trip expecting to get lodging, meals and three or four dollars from the few Catholics there. It so happened that a violent storm arose on the Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds and for safety, the Captain ordered all the cargo thrown overboard. After a terrific night on the waters, the passengers were landed at Elizabeth City, early in the morning. Having my Mass kit, I wanted to say Mass but did not know or hear of any Catholics living in Elizabeth City. After many inquiries, I was told that an old lady by the name of Mrs. Richardson, living over a store, was a Catholic. Finding the place after considerable walking, I opened the ground floor door leading into a dark hall and up a dark stairway, when suddenly I heard a loud and very reverent voice say at the top of the stairway, "Come in, Reverend Father." Oh! what a contrast was the feeling that possessed my soul to the cold and indifferent attitude on the outside as I hastened up the stairway. I felt as if I could cut the atmosphere with a knife, created by that woman's voice. What was my surprise to find a venerable and highly cultured woman on crutches, receiving me and giving me a soulful warm greeting, while leading me into her room. After a few words were spoken about our trip overnight, I spoke of the interesting account I had read of three little girls building a church in Edenton in 1858, and what a joy and real pleasure it was giving me to go there. Listening to me with rapt attention, she asked me very casually, with very uncommon interest where I had read that interesting account of the building of the church in Edenton in 1858. I replied, "In the *Catholic Standard & Times of Philadelphia.* It was also printed in the *Catholic Mirror of Baltimore.*" She then said, "Did you ever

meet the authoress of that account of the building of the Edenton Church?" When I replied that I had not, "Well," she said, "the authoress sits before you, and I was one of the little girls."

It was customary for a number of families in eastern Carolina, before the War Between the States, to send their daughters to the convent schools in and near Baltimore. The three girls, all of whom I met in their venerable years, became converts while attending the convent schools. One was a daughter of Judge Moore. Mrs. Richardson described to me how she approached the priest who came from Norfolk, to let her, her sister, and Miss Moore build a church in Edenton. The good priest advised them to forget the idea of building a church, that they were recent converts, did not have the money and he could not get the large amount of money necessary to build a church anywhere. The young girls, in their zeal and determination, could not take a negative answer nor could they be discouraged in what they believed to be pleasing to God. As they were well educated and cultured, one of them taught music, another translated a small volume of Pius VII, and the other did crochet work. As Mrs. Richardson was the leader, she went to Baltimore and made a general confession to Archbishop Kendrick. She then asked for his permission to collect in Baltimore. In response, the great Archbishop said to her, "Go, my little apostle and put the insults in your pocketbook as well as the money." She succeeded in collecting a considerable amount of money which was swelled to an attractive figure with the additional contributions of the other two apostolic girls of the band of three, who worked from their home center. When the priest came on his regular scheduled time to Edenton, he was both agreeably surprised and edified, but he added into a word of caution, "I will permit you to build, provided you stop the work when the money gives out." Mrs. Richardson described to me how the girls would sit down among the shavings on Saturday evenings and hoping and praying that a few checks would come in the mail on Monday morning as they had written to all the dignitaries in the United States and Europe. And checks were received gratefully till the church was completed. Mrs. Richardson's father gave the land on which the church was built. On the day of the dedication, the church was filled to capacity and hundreds of non-Catholics of all persuasion were on the outside of the church. The Bishop of Charleston did not bring a holy water vessel to be used in blessing the church inside and out, in the place of which he used a little green twig. At the time of the Communion, the three girls went up to receive Holy

Communion, and as they knelt at the Communion rail, a beautiful white dove flew in the window and made three evolutions around and flew out again.

After I had said Mass in a vacant room about a block away from Mrs. Richardson's two-room apartment, the question came up where I would stay as I could not arrange to leave Elizabeth City for Edenton until the next day, and I was without funds. The good lady, after the Mass, gave me a dollar and told me to go to a certain small hotel and told me to be sure that I came to see her before I left the city. It was in the days of the oil lamps and wood stoves. The help saw that I had plenty of oil for my lamp and plenty of wood for my stove and in addition, I had three good square meals. When I prepared to check out, I asked the old Confederate gentleman who owned the hotel, what were the charges. He replied that he did not believe in charging ministers for meals and that he was only going to charge me a dollar, adding that he had a daughter working in the kitchen who a month or so ago, visited a Catholic friend in New Bern and while there she went to the church with her friend and saw me in the church. Hastening to the humble home of Mrs. Richardson, the leader of the three little girls who built St. Ann's Church in Edenton, asked me as soon as I was in her presence, "Father, what did they charge you at the hotel?" I quickly answered, "Do you know that the venerable old gentleman, the proprietor of the hotel, only charged me a dollar." Raising her hands in a reverent attitude, she said, "Thanks be to the Sacred Heart, it was the only dollar I had, and I asked the Sacred Heart that you would only be charged a dollar." "Well," I said, "God certainly answered your prayer." The good lady wrote a little spiritual book called "Spiritual Crumbs," and a rather heavy work of her life, I was told, but I have never seen the book. She sent me a beautiful Christmas poem. She died shortly after I left New Bern for other Missions, in Brooklyn, N. Y.

In the fall of 1898 there was only one Catholic in Elizabeth City, the venerable Mrs. Richardson. Now, in 1957, there are two flourishing Churches and two Schools. Several years after I left New Bern, I overheard two or three younger priests inquiring about when was the first Mass said in Elizabeth City. It may be that some pioneer priest, in passing, may have said Mass there; it may be, too, that Father Price said Mass there and most likely did, but one fact is certain to me, that I said Mass in Elizabeth City in the fall of 1898 when there was only one Catholic living there at that time.

In the month of February, 1899, I received a sudden call from Staunton, Virginia, to come to the bedside of my dying father. I arrived in Staunton with my younger sister, Mary Loretta O'Brien who was on a visit to me, the day before my father died. The venerable Father McCarthy, one of the older priests of the diocese of Richmond, gave my father the last Sacraments of the Church. My father was in the Federal Army and as a well-mannered Irishman, he had no prejudice against any people in the United States, North, South, East, or West. Whenever the sons of the Confederate veterans turned out in any local parade, he always marched with them and would relate to them his experiences in battles with the Indians in the Rocky Mountains, ten years before the War Between the States. At that time, too, patriots of the North and the South, who loved our united Country that was baptized in battle by true soldiers who were ready to die for their convictions. One of the ideals of a patriotic, liberal and urbane Virginia gentleman, was a Mr. Patterson, the Commander of the Confederate Post at Staunton. As a warm friend of my father, he said in an official way to the members of his Post, "Comrades, let us go out and bury comrade O'Brien." I said the Requiem Mass for the repose of my father's soul in St. Francis Church and was thrilled by the presence of the Confederate veterans and their sons at the Mass. I feel proud that I lived in Staunton for seven years and that I had the privilege to say my first Mass in the city at the Church of St. Francis.

While in Staunton, I received a letter from my bishop of North Carolina, transferring me from New Bern to Fayetteville, N. C. I arrived in Fayetteville in the early part of March, 1899. My younger sister, Mary Loretta, came to live with me in Fayetteville; and my oldest sister, Catherine Agnes, as a good bread winner, went to Washington, D. C., the city of her birth, and there was married to a Mr. Williams. Fayetteville was headquarters of some twenty Missions extending to Wilmington and from Wilmington to Wadesboro and also from Wilmington to Florence, South Carolina, and thence from Florence to Fayetteville. The priest did not have any jurisdiction in South Carolina, but he had to go into Florence to work a few Stations leading towards Florence and then from Florence, to work a few Stations leading to Fayetteville, N. C. I gave two Sundays to Fayetteville and two Sundays to the Missions as well as the week days. On one occasion Mr. Maloney, the father of Mr. Joseph, who is now a very successful businessman in Fayetteville and who was my altar-boy, came to see me in Durham and in greeting me, suddenly said to his friends who were present, "There is the only man who could fill our Church." "Hold now,

my good friend," I replied, "that compliment, while appreciated, I think requires some interpretation. I certainly could fill it whenever I had a burial and when I would have an extra service in the Church, for the colored people, on Sunday afternoon." "Well," he persisted, "you could certainly fill it in some way." During my pastorate in Fayetteville, my younger sister, who kept house for me, died in April 1900, at the old Highsmith and Maris hospital that has long since burned down. Father Price gave her the last sacraments and said the High Requiem Mass for the repose of her soul. She is buried in Fayetteville.

In the month of October 1899, Bishop Leo Haid, O.S.B., made a visitation to a few Stations on my extensive Mission and asked me to write them up. The following written account of them was published in the Baltimore *Catholic Mirror* in November 1899.

*THE CATHOLIC MIRROR**

Vol. L — No. 46

Official Organ of the
Archdiocese of Baltimore.

Baltimore, Saturday, Nov. 18, 1899.

Growth of the Church

Bishop Haid at Fayetteville, on his Visitation—More Liberal Spirit Now Shown by Non-Catholics—Encouraging Outlook

The following interesting account which in part follows, of the condition and prospects of the Church in North Carolina and of characteristic scenes, incidents and narrative of that missionary country, was sent us through the kindness of Father Price, editor of *The Truth*, the well-known monthly publication for Catholics and non-Catholics:

The little flock of Fayetteville was busily engaged preparing for the Bishop's coming. The Bishop had promised to pay them a visit, and they wished to give him a good reception. A short time before his arrival a few of the more energetic of the devoted little band offered their services to thoroughly clean and dust the quaint old church and to tastefully arrange and decorate the dear old altar. This delighted the missionary and soon the church was astir with the bustle and activity of faithful and cheerful workers.

---

* Bishop Leo Haid suggested to Father O'Brien that he prepare a write-up covering the growth of the Church in Fayetteville, and send it to Father Price for publication in his magazine "THE TRUTH". Father Price, not having sufficient space in his magazine, sent it to the Baltimore "CATHOLIC MIRROR".

Conspicuous among the rest was a venerable lady of eighty winters. She assisted at the holy sacrifice in this dear old church for nearly sixty years. It was her place of divine worship since the early forties. She was the organist in this church when its congregation was a prosperous one. In better days she was very generous in its support and in the beautifying and adorning of its sanctuary. Her home was the home for priests; within her hospitable doors the missionary always found a warm welcome. No wonder, then, that the humblest work within those hallowed walls endeared to her by holy association of long years should be a work of love to her; no wonder that the decoration of the altar she decorated nearly sixty years ago should be a duty at once so sacred and so holy; no wonder that all its surrounding should be so dear, so fraught with charms and so lovely to her.

It is a pleasure to hear her tell the history of the oldest church in the state. "When Wilmington, Raleigh and Cheraw," she says, "were missions, Fayetteville had a parish priest." She often recounts to the missionary happy incidents she loves of those good and great men who have gone before us, and unconsciously reminds him of how much they labored and what they used to do for the greater honor and glory of God in the Carolinas.

A Charlestonian by birth, she came to Fayetteville in 1840 and took up her residence here. In response to an inquiry of how long the old church was standing, she said: "I came here from Charleston in the year 1840, and the building was as you see it, with but little change. The church and property was given by a near relative of mine, a Mr. Kelly, in 1836."

Following her into the front room of the cosy little rectory, she pointed to an old oil painting of the benefactor. Mr. Kelly was a good old Irish gentleman, a good supporter and a warm friend of the clergy. He loved the grand old faith, and died as he had lived, in the sweet odor of his virtues.

Brought up under the shadow of Charleston Cathedral, where the illustrious Bishop England so often preached, the good lady drank in his golden wisdom as it fell from his eloquent lips, which fully accounts for the godly principles she still retains. "The Angelus is rung here, Father, for the conversion of Fayetteville." Hers is, indeed, a warm and lively faith. When the little black boy is tardy in the belfry her voice is heard in reproof for his negligence. The Angelus is rung in but few places in the State. Would to God that this good old Catholic custom were introduced in all our churches. The people of Fayetteville have been accustomed to the ringing of the Angelus for the last sixty years. It has a wholesome

and distinctly Catholic influence upon them. Very often remarks are overheard among them of the Angelus rung in the belfry of old St. Patrick's appealing to them with so much soulful feeling. Indeed, the institution is a lovely one, and calculated to bring about much good, especially in non-Catholic surroundings.

But let us hasten to welcome our good Bishop. On Saturday, the priest and Catholic sheriff met his Lordship as he came through the car, greeted him heartily, relieved him of his baggage, seated him in the handsomest vehicle in the city and drove him through the main avenue to the old church. There the Catholics came to kiss the episcopal ring and give honor to him who is the chief representative of the grand old Apostolic and Catholic faith in North Carolina.

Sunday was a bright, clear day in Fayetteville. A little altar boy was up bright and early waiting in the church to confess to the priest and serve the Bishop's Mass. Already, children lighthearted and happy eight miles away were driving through the piney country to the old church. The procession formed at the rectory at eleven o'clock, marched slowly to the front of the church, and up the center aisle to the altar. Candidates for confirmation, altar boys, the priest and the Bishop composed the procession. The beautifully decorated altar, together with the altar boys, the priest and the Bishop kneeling to the sanctuary made a very impressive and strikingly grave picture. The simple procession, though common in our great cathedrals, was something unusual in the dear old church of Fayetteville and as such the impression left of its simple grandeur will be long remembered and appreciated by the little congregation of old St. Patrick's.

After the divine Celebration the Bishop preached a very earnest and impressive sermon on the gospel of the Sunday to a goodly number of Fayetteville's most intelligent people. He then made a few appropriate remarks on the sacrament of confirmation, and then administered the sacrament to a class of ten boys, three of whom were converts, one being received into the church that very morning. At the evening services the Bishop preached a logical, forcible, and very impressive discourse on "The Catholic and Protestant rule of faith compared." This sermon had a decidedly good effect upon a good many of the more earnest ones. The body of the church and the galleries were crowded with intelligent and very attentive non-Catholics.

During the Bishop's evening sermon the organist was suddenly stricken down with paralysis. The priest was quietly notified and as quietly hastened to his side; seeing that he was conscious and receiving assurances of his recovery, the priest spoke a few words of

encouragement and promised to be with him after Benediction. There was no disturbance in the congregation, as the people were in total ignorance of the occurrence. As the priest was giving Benediction the professor received a third stroke, the priest was again called, and this time finding him unconscious gave him conditional absolution. In this condition he was carried to the rectory, followed by a little band of sympathetic Catholics. Slowly regaining consciousness, he confessed his sins and while most of the members of the little congregation were kneeling around the genial old gentleman pouring forth their souls in prayer for his recovery, the priest administered Extreme Unction. After the reception of this sacrament it was noticed to the surprise and joy of all that he rapidly regained his strength. The good old gentleman's heart was gratitude itself; before leaving for his home he insisted upon kissing "my dear Bishop's ring," thus showing to the last that he could not forget under any circumstances that childlike faith and reverence for God's anointed instilled into his heart in that lovely little "green isle across the sea."

This gentleman, who was so profuse in his protestations to honor "my dear Bishop" before his arrival, is a gentleman of the old school, of six and seventy years and a universally acknowledged master of music. He has given sacred concerts in almost every leading city of the world, crossing the ocean no less than eighteen times to fill engagements in Paris, Venice, London and other European cities. An old scrap-book in his possession will tell his history. It is filled with clippings from the leading papers in the United States, printed in the 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's in praise of this musical genius. In his advanced age he still retains a little of the mellowy sweetness of the rich baritone voice which one proved a fortune to him. For a good number of years he was the organist for Archbishop Hughes of New York, and was therefore well and ably fitted by knowledge and by experience to train the little Fayetteville choir. The music was of such a high order, the words so well pronounced, and the parts so well sung as to merit a well-deserved compliment from the Bishop, and the old gentleman felt rewarded for his services.

Fayetteville is a lovely old town. The people are, as a general rule, social, intelligent, thrifty and law abiding. They have great respect for the priest, and withal have a disposition to be fair-minded. Much of that old prejudice which seems to be the illigitimate inheritance of the old towns in North Carolina is fast disappearing and giving way to a better feeling and more reasonable view of the rights and claims of good "old Mother Church." A happy disposition to study the doctrines of the old Church of

their forefathers is slowly but surely taking possession of many of her best people. In confirmation of the truth of what I say I cite a letter written by a non-Catholic of Fayetteville and printed in the Raleigh *Post* and in the Wilmington *Messenger*: "Right Rev. Lee Haid, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church in North Carolina, conducted very impressive services at St. Patrick's Church on Sunday morning and evening, with discourses marked by great ability and theological erudition. There were ten additions to the membership of the congregation—only a continuance of the growth of that religious denomination in the community for some time back, and the writer predicts that in the not very distant future the church will have a priest permanently stationed here."

"Before the war—in the 40's and 50's the Roman Catholics were relatively quite strong in Fayetteville, and were then, as they are now, among the town's most respected people. Charles and Patrick Montague, both families of the Monaghans, the Kellys and the Poorys gave of their ample means, devoted their energies and illustrated their faith in their devotion to the church."

This augurs well, indeed, for Fayetteville, the spirit is indeed gratifying. It discovers their kindly attitude towards the grand old Church of their ancestors, and proves that the example of the godly, as our Good Master taught, will bring forth good fruit in His own good time. The "ten additions" of which the gentleman speaks composed our little confirmation class, three of whom, as I stated above, were converts, one being received into the Church that very morning.

"The growth of the Church in this community for some time back," together with his prediction that Fayetteville "will have a parish priest in the not very distant future," so admirably expressed in his letter is indeed encouraging. May God grant his prediction. May God prosper the little congregation; may God bless the little city with a fruitful harvest of chosen souls for His greater glory and honor is the earnest prayer of the missionary.

On Monday the Bishop accompanied by the priest was driven four miles through a luxuriant and charming country to "Today," a plantation owned by Colonel Wharton Green, a southern gentleman of the old school, a gallant old soldier of the confederacy, a politician, able lawyer, and ex-congressman. "Today" has the reputation of being the finest vineyard on this side of California. The Bishop was delightfully entertained here, the Colonel and the Bishop exchanging views on civil, political and national questions of the day and finally entering upon a very interesting chat on agriculture. The Colonel has a great knowledge of farming; besides being especially interested in his own plantation he served on the

committee of Agriculture in Congress. The Bishop also has an unusual amount of agrarian knowledge in his mental storehouse. The Bishop's farm in Belmont is in good condition and in his community he is considered almost an authority on farming. In this he is true to the traditions of his order, the great Benedictine Order, which after preaching the Gospel of Peace, and refining the manners of the barbarous borders of Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries, taught them to till the soil and thus bring forth fruit from mother earth in greater abundance. As of old wherever the great order founds a monastery she is sure to make the surroundings one of the garden spots of the world. The colonel took great pleasure in telling the Bishop that he received the blessing of Pius IX in the streets of Rome and remarked that the man who bore his countenance could not be otherwise than a godly man. Before leaving, the Colonel and his charming household insisted upon giving the Bishop a musical entertainment of a street scene in 1776, through the Gramaphone. "Yankee Doodle," by the band, the cries of the people and the cheers for General Washington were really remarkable and were greatly enjoyed.

Leaving Fayetteville on Monday evening we were on our way to Hub, now called Boardman, N. C., via Florence, S. C. We stopped over night in Florence and were highly entertained by the Kuker family. Tuesday about half after twelve we found ourselves in Boardman.

Boardman has one of the largest if not the largest lumber mill in the south and carries on quite an extensive lumbering trade. The few Catholics there are mostly employed as skilled hands in the mill and are highly respected. The public school is taught by a Catholic lady from South Carolina and will soon have a Catholic assistant. Owing to the small number of Catholics the priest is obliged to say mass, give instructions and teach catechism in a private house. It seems as though non-Catholics as a general rule feel a delicacy in attending Catholic services in private houses; before services a goodly number of respectable people requested to be admitted and were gladly welcomed to all of our services.

The Bishop spoke touchingly to the little gathering on the goodness and mercy of God, on the great sacrament which was about to be administered by a lawful successor of the apostles in that little room in North Carolina and then confirmed a class of three. On one occasion a native who had been brought up on a farm far away from the villages, who had never seen a priest and who knew absolutely nothing whatever about the church accompanied the children to Sunday School. The priest invited her to come to evening services; going to her mistress she remarked

that she would like to go to church because "That priest," told her to do so. The next Sunday she agreeably surprised the Sunday School teacher by coming and telling the teacher that the priest said she was a member of the class and what was a greater surprise she knew her lesson and now since she has seen and heard the Bishop she has a greater desire to study her catechism.

After giving confirmation the Bishop preached on the "One True Church" to a large crowd in a hall where the non-Catholics usually hold services. The sentence "Accountable to God" was printed in large letters on the wall, and the Bishop took advantage of this after referring to it and spoke of that one great responsibility which his hearers owed to God in the salvation of their immortal souls. In concluding he invited them to hear the priest whenever he came among them; exhorted them to consider well what he had said and to study the doctrines of the grand old faith their forefathers loved so well before the unfortunate division of the one great Christian family.

We were up half after four on Wednesday morning in order to give them time for the Bishop to read mass and to catch the six o'clock train for Wilmington via Fair Bluff. To get to Fair Bluff we were obliged to take a log train running through a twelve mile swamp. The superintendent, a clever gentleman owning a big interest in the firm, came to pay his respects to the clergy and to offer the services of his private cars to take them to the Bluff. Arriving at the Bluff after an enjoyable ride through the picturesque swamp of jungle pines and cypresses a gentleman relieved us of our baggage and we were glad enough to start on foot for the village. Walking single file for some time in a pathway grown over with grass and wet with dew, we were obliged to cross a deep ravine over a log which served as a bridge. The Bishop bravely led the way followed by the priest; gaining the road, our good friend who relieved us of our baggage offered his buggy but the Bishop preferred to walk in company with the gentleman and enjoy the freshness of the morning air while the priest drove on to our good friend's house. There is only one Catholic man living in Fair Bluff and there were only five souls at mass that morning, the Bishop, our good friend, two Irish pedlers who happened to be in the village and who would have the Bishop and priest's blessing, and a non-Catholic lady. The priest gave an instruction after mass. It may sound a little out of the ordinary to some who are not accustomed to missionary life to preach to four, but the fact is the missionary knows that if an instruction is not given on an occasion such as this a golden opportunity for doing good is lost, the missionary knows that it is to his own eternal gain to give an instruction, per-

haps to the eternal gain of the souls of their neighbors who are influenced by example and to the greater honor and glory of God to preach to three, to two, or even to give an instruction to one. We may or may not see and reap the fruit but in God's own good time fruit will come. After services till train time the Bishop interested himself by trimming a fruit tree, walking in the garden and giving practical talks to our good friends on farming and how to cultivate a good orchard. Eleven o'clock we took the train for Wilmington and were met at the depot at 1:00 P.M. by Father Dennen who took splendid care of us till Thursday, 3:45 P.M. when we boarded the train for Farmer's Turnout.

Farmer's is a mere flag station on the Wilmington and South Carolina Branch of the Coast Line. It was the home of Major Reilly, a veteran of the Mexican War, of gallant and meritorious conduct, an Indian fighter and a soldier of distinction in the Civil War. When the Federal forces bombarded Fort Fisher the fearless old Major was in command. Taken at a disadvantage and subjected to a heavy fire from the attacking forces, the Major defended the fort with unflinching courage till his ammunition was exhausted, then taking up a gun he threw it with all his force at his victors and cried, "Take the old rusty thing." We were entertained here by the family of the deceased Major.

There is a neat little church at Farmer's dedicated to the honor of the great St. Paul. There is also a flourishing little mission at Cronley, six miles from Farmer's, on the Carolina Central Road. At one time the priest succeeded in getting all the grown members to their duty. A comparatively large crowd of non-Catholics generally assembled in the hall to listen to the priest, who hopes to have a few under instructions here soon. The priest has much to be grateful for to the former superintendent of Cronley mill for the flourishing condition of the mission. This gentleman, together with his wife, took an unselfish interest in the Sunday School and the general work of the Church and greatly aided the priest. Would to God that there were many such families scattered over the vast territory attended by the priest to cultivate and nourish the seed sown during his monthly or occasional visits. Such noble work undertaken from a motive of pure charity will certainly merit a divine reward. The present superintendent of the Cronley mill I am told is a good Catholic. On the occasion of the Bishop's visit to Farmer's a number of the Catholics of Cronley attended the little church, and among them were four of the eight candidates confirmed. The Bishop spoke to them of the reasonableness of their faith, and concluded with a few warm words of encouragement.

Our host, as did the flagman, took it for granted that the freight bound for Wilmington, as it generally is, would be far behind the scheduled time. For this reason supper was not especially hurried. When seated at table engaged in pleasant conversation the shrill sound of a whistle and the rumbling of an approaching freight was heard. Getting up in all haste, we seized our baggage and just as we gained the door the heavy freight went rolling by. The flagman, running to his post, whirled his lantern, and by good fortune caught the eye of the conductor who slowed down, stopped and backed up his freight. Feeling somewhat easier after this bit of experience we boarded the train and in response to our queries the conductor good naturedly and somewhat earnestly told us that his train was not signaled in time, that it was against the law for him to back up, especially when a through freight was only a few miles behind, which might possibly result in a collision.

Arriving in Wilmington the freight stopped at Fourth Street, and rather than wait a half hour or more for it to pull into the depot, we got out and walked. Going down the side track that wet and dark evening, we were soon compelled to put on a double quick movement in order to gain an opening in the side of a hill before the shifting engine would be down upon us. The opening, which proved to be a pathway leading up a big hill to the street, was between a sandbank of the railroad and brick wall which enclosed the tracks. The Bishop reached this pathway first, followed by the priest who, trudging to get high and dry footing in the pathway, stepped right into a little pool of water. Jumping out he went climbing up the steep hill in darkness just as the engine went by, puffing in his ear. In company with Father Dennen we were driven from the depot to the rectory to rest and prepare for the work of the morrow.

On Friday about ten o'clock we were in Montague, a flag station about sixteen miles above Wilmington on the Cape Fear and Yadkin division of the Coast Line. This is one of the most flourishing little missions of the twenty stations, attended by the missionary. It is an ideal place for a Catholic colony. There is a large tract of rich and very productive land here which is not under cultivation, and which, with a little skill and brawn, would bring a neat little return. A church to which the Right Rev. Bishop contributed liberally is now in course of erection here—it will also serve as a school house for the Catholics. At the dedication we look forward to the coming of a large crowd of Catholics from Wilmington to encourage us and to show an active interest in the growth of the grand old faith they love so much. Two adults were received into the Church here, and the writer thinks a few more will soon be

under instruction. A lady was very desirous to know the necessary questions to be asked in order to find out the validity or invalidity of the Sacrament of Baptism that she may know how to proceed when her time comes to enter into the hands of Peter. A young man, who came ten miles to hear the Bishop, remarked to the priest after the Bishop's morning instruction: "I tell you Christ did not come on earth and lay His platform for nothing."

In the evening the Bishop preached an eloquent and thoughtful sermon on the religion which our Divine Savior founded as contrasted with that which men try to teach. The audience, which was a large one, had little or no prejudice. These good people were very attentive, and were very grateful to have the Bishop preach for them. There was even a place reserved for the colored people. One very enthusiastic sister did not hesitate to nod approvingly from time to time, and to whisper out occasionally that the Bishop was telling the whole truth. May God bless and prosper this little garden in His great vineyard.

Leaving Montague, about 6:15 P.M. we arrived in Wilmington about 7:00 P.M., and again enjoyed the hospitality of the reverend pastor.

The Bishop and the priest parted company at Clio, the next mission. The Bishop, full of labors and good works performed on the mission, was driven to Hamlet Sunday evening, October 8, to take the train for Belmont, there to fill the professor's chair and to teach his young theologians how to become good missionaries. The priest remained in Clio until the next morning, when he took the train for his happy little home at the cozy little rectory in the town of Fayetteville.

The mission priest attends about twenty stations, which cover a large territory. He has his house to support, his traveling expenses to pay, his clothing to provide, the poor mission stations to keep up, and to do this he is obliged to make innumberable sacrifices and can barely succeed even then. These persons, laity and clergy, who could direct to him the alms donated for holy masses would greatly aid him and would surely do a noble act of charity. The name of this self-sacrificing priest whose missions are the poorest in that state of poor missions, North Carolina, is Father O'Brien. His address is Fayetteville, North Carolina.

CHAPTER III

IN THE FALL of 1899, as I was making my monthly rounds on my widely scattered missions, I boarded a freight train as it left in a convenient time from the Mission that I had attended, to fulfill my appointment at the next Mission station. The long freight started suddenly and in doing so jerked the box cars in the rear, especially the caboose, with such a force, that it threw me, bodily, from one end of the caboose to the front, against the knob of a surging door that struck me a stunning, deadly blow in the spine. I was taken out of the caboose in a crippled condition. As painful and as serious as it could have been, it was a blessing that the knob on the door stopped my momentum, else I would have been thrown out between the couplings and ground to pieces. After recuperating for twenty-four hours, I skipped over one or two Mission stations and worked two stations before I left for my headquarters in Fayetteville. My doctor examined me and said that there were no bones broken, yet in a day or two, I was taken with malaria fever, the typhoid fever, and intermittent fevers. Father Price was thinking about having me taken to St. Agnes' hospital in Baltimore, and the doctor said I would not live till I got to Baltimore. I was a patient in the old Highsmith & Morris Hospital for over four months and was not expected to live. This hospital in Fayetteville was situated not far from the old landmark Market House, which has long since burned down.

About this time, Father Price founded his orphanage for boys at Nazareth and was preparing to build an Apostolic House as a center for priests to work among non-Catholics. The girls' orphanage was at Belmont, N. C., and in after years, the orphan girls were sent to Nazareth. On Christmas Day in 1900, Bishop Haid appointed me to be the first chaplain of the Nazareth Orphanage. Slowly regaining my strength, I was not able to get to Nazareth till the 12th of February, 1901. Father Michael Irwin was ordained in June 1900, and was sent immediately as an assistant to Father Price. Fathers Price and Irwin built small chapels in several small Stations in Wake County and invited the non-Catholics to listen to the explanations of Catholic doctrine. As Father Price had to spend a good deal of time to take up collection in northern cities for the support of the orphans, the successful circulation of his magazine, *Truth,* and the building of chapels. As soon as I was able, in addition to my duties as chaplain, attending my appointments at the Poor House, Penitentiary and Old Soldier's Home, I assisted Fathers Price and Irwin during the week to give missions to non-Catholics. We had a number of converts in this work.

After my arrival at Nazareth, owing to my weakened condition, I was not able to perform a chaplain's duties. I had several spells of sickness and one was a serious case of abdominal trouble. The doctor was very much concerned about me. The children were called to the chapel to pray for me. Thanks be to God, I was relieved while the children were praying for me in the Chapel. God, in His merciful compassion, heard their prayers.

It was Father Price's great desire, that in the providence of God, congenial men would associate with him and naturally further his apostleship under his leadership in his zeal and sacrifice for the conversion of North Carolina. Realizing that now two other priests were living together with him, sharing his spirit of poverty and wholly in sympathy with his apostolic labors, he saw the necessity of cooperating in spirit to the moral willingness of his assistants to mutually work together for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, to hold them together, legally, by the establishing of an Apostolate Company, without capital. The incorporators of the Apostolate Company were the Rev. Thomas F. Price, Rev. Michael Irwin and Rev. William F. O'Brien, all of Nazareth, N. C. There was also a Board of Trustees consisting of Fathers Price, Irwin and O'Brien, and three laymen: Joseph F. Farrell, Raleigh; William T. O'Brien, Durham; and Robert M. Douglas, Justice of the Supreme Court, Greensboro. The president of the Board of Trustees, ipso facto, was Rt. Rev. Leo Haid, O.S.B. D.D., Vicar Apostolic of North Carolina and Abbot of St. Mary's Monastery, Belmont.

It is singular that while the Bishop's name was given as the president of the Board of Trustees, yet his name or signature was not on the legal document that was drawn up, of the Apostolate Company. I feel that I should state here and now, while I was deeply attracted to Fathers Price and Irwin, I did make it known to them that I could not see how the Apostolate Company would be a success without the Bishop's signature upon it, even though I could not say that Father Price was not urged on by a divine directive, but that I had no proof of it at the time. At a meeting with Bishop Haid, Father Price and myself with reference to Nazareth, the Bishop in deep thought, raised his hand to his head as if to smooth back his hair from his forehead and said, "Father Price, I am a practical man, I do not have any spiritual light from above that priests should band together in community life." I presumably added that we did not know the Will of God in regard to the directory of Nazareth. Father Price, it seemed evident to me, felt that he was urged on by a divine directive. I was not opposed to Father Price, rather, I was willing to co-operate with him in any formation at Nazareth, as God willed, if the Bishop did not call

me to work elsewhere in the Vicariate. In fact, Father Price proposed to Father Irwin and myself that he would write to the Bishop and state that as priests at Nazareth, we would work anywhere in the state that he wished. Father Irwin and myself said that we did not see the necessity of a letter of that kind to the Bishop because we knew that the Bishop could send us to any particular place he wished to send us in the state.

While sitting on the porch of the old frame building of the boys' orphanage, convalescing, I often admired the field on the other side of the road as an ideal place for a permanent orphanage. The field was purchased by a gentleman in Raleigh while Father Price was on a collecting tour. On his return, I informed him of it. Fortunately, after an interview with the gentleman, Father Price was able to re-buy and come into possession of it. About a year later, the Church of the Holy Name of Jesus and the Apostolic Home, dedicated to the Queen of the Apostles, was erected on the ideally located and beautiful lot. At this time there were a number of apostolic bands forming in a number of dioceses. These apostolic men would meet in conventions from time to time to listen to papers read by appointment from all sections of the country. Father Price was a good penman as his father was before him, he being editor of the old Wilmington *Journal* from 1848 to 1872. The letters of the missionaries were very interesting and were published in their missionary journal, but to me, Father Price's writings seemed especially appealing and very good. It may be because of the local flavor that was especially appealing to me. These letters were read far and wide and they attracted young men from Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut and Ohio, to apply to enroll as missionary students in the North Carolina Apostolate. In addition to two teachers, Father Price and Father Irwin gave extra time to clerical instruction to about twenty students. They were being well trained in spiritual exercises. Father O'Rourke, the Jesuit Master of Novices, took them through the thirty day exercises of St. Ignatius. The students made up an excellent Choir. I was on hand every Sunday to sing the High Mass in the church while Fathers Price and Irwin would officiate at a station for non-Catholics in Wake County.

In the year 1905, it seemed that all the missions were moving along smoothly, with a promise of zealous future priests to labor in North Carolina. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a mysterious fire broke out and razed the Apostolic House to the ground. Two boys, who were not students, dropped from the fourth story hoping to land on a mattress that was placed on the ground. One was seriously injured and died in a few hours, the other was badly

crippled and died two or three years later. One of the students who was also an athlete, Thomas Wallace, dropped from a fourth floor onto a mattress, suffering some painful temporary injuries to his feet. The rest of the students got out of the burning building like a rush of trained men. I was in another side of the burning building and was compelled to hang by my hands from a window sill on the third floor and to drop to the ground. I cannot say that I lost consciousness as I recollect trying to come to. I did think my neck was broken and that I was helpless, lying on my back. As the stunning blow that I received on my back eased somewhat, I realized that someone was standing over me, and with his assistance I helped myself up. This person was John Cassidy of Philadelphia, who afterwards became a Benedictine priest and labored in the Richmond diocese. He has long since gone to his reward.

I was taken to the infirmary at the Boys' frame building orphanage, under the care of the Sisters of Mercy. The doctor came to see me, stared at me a few moments and shook his head. He had told the Sisters, after I came from Fayetteville, that I would not be able to do any work as my body was worn out on the Missions. Then a good Sister, who nursed me when I first arrived at Nazareth, asked me how I felt. I replied, "that I would be up and out of bed in four or five days." This brought forth a hearty laugh from the good, patient Sister, as she knew that the least wind would blow me over. "Sister," I said, "I will tell you a secret, if you will not tell anybody. You know I was knocked down on a train on the Fayetteville Mission, and received a strong blow on my spine, and as a result my body did not function correctly; now in dropping down out of that burning building from the third floor, I received a whale of a crack on my back and my body was knocked straight again." My prediction was correct; I was up talking to the orphan boys five days later.

About the year 1903, I was recalled by Bishop Haid to take up again the work on the Fayetteville Missions, as Father Peter Marion was seriously ill in Asheville and his brother, Patrick who was ordained to relieve me in Fayetteville, was called to take up his brother's work. I worked the Fayetteville mission for nine months and at the end of that time I was not too well, so I wrote to my Bishop that I surely would have a case of nervous prostration if I continued on the Fayetteville mission in poor health. I left for Nazareth and again took up my work there as Chaplain. The Bishop recalled Father Patrick from Asheville to renew his first appointment to the Fayetteville missions. In 1904, Father Wherty of the Goldsboro mission was not too well, and the Bishop again

took me from the duties of Chaplain at Nazareth, to take Father Wherty's place on the Goldsboro mission. The first two churches that Father Price built were the Immaculate Conception Church at Halifax and St. Mary's at Goldsboro. During the several months that I worked on the Goldsboro mission, the mother Church of these missions, St. Mary's, which the congregation loved and was so devoted to, did not have a statue of the Blessed Virgin. I immediately got busy and arranged to get a beautiful statue of the Blessed Virgin for the Church. Father Price and Father Irwin came from Nazareth with the orphans and Sisters, together with parishioners from Rocky Mount and other stations to celebrate a festival of Mary and to crown the statue, representing Mary, as the Queen of May. Father Price preached a beautiful sermon on the Blessed Virgin. It was like a homecoming day to the Catholics of Goldsboro. The majority of the little congregation were born in Goldsboro, and they were glad to have Father Price with them on that festive day of May, as Father Price was a special client of Mary. He had built the church and was, to them, the Tarheel of Tarheels.

At the end of six or seven months I approached my Bishop and said, "The priest does not have a house to live in on the Goldsboro mission and if he has any converts to instruct, the only place he can invite them to is a little sacristy and if arrangements cannot be made before time with two of three families who would kindly receive the priest, of necessity he would have to go to the hotel, and the hotel is no place for the priest to go." The Bishop replied, "How much would be required to get a convenient place? Would a thousand dollars do?" I answered that I thought that sum would do. The Bishop then told me that Father Wherty was now well enough to take up his work where he left off and as I loved to be a member of the community at Nazareth, I was glad to return there.

In addition to my work at Nazareth as Chaplain, I instructed two groups of persons in one class at the penitentiary at Raleigh every Saturday who voluntarily attended. A white group and a colored group. They were all non-Catholics. After my class instruction, I always paid a visit to the Infirmary and on one of my weekly Saturday visits there, I was told of a colored man there who was near death. His body did not function and he was unconscious. Looking into his face, I recognized him as one who had attended my class. Turning to the sick prisoners, who were present and who may have been robbers or murderers, I said I was going to baptize the sick man conditionally, explaining to them that I did not know if he wished to be baptized, or whether he was baptized or not; and that this baptism, even if he did not want to be baptized, would

not do him any harm. But for the reason that he attended my class, I was going to give him the benefit of the doubt. That this was a serious matter, eternal salvation of his soul might be at stake. God, our Teacher, says Himself, "Unless a man is born of water and the Holy Ghost, he will not enter into the kingdom of heaven." I baptized him, conditionally, and anointed him, conditionally. After I anointed him my eyes were riveted on the remaining prayers in the ritual and when finished, I did not look at the sick man again, but looked at the prisoners in general. Feeling or sensing a thick atmosphere of doubt and even opposition, I waved to them all and said, "Goodbye now, I will see you next Saturday," and was really glad to be outside the door. The following Saturday, on my visit to the infirmary, all the prisoners were looking at me in a silent, even a reverential awe. I said to them, "Why are you looking at me with such a peculiar stare?" "Why," they answered, "aren't you the man that raised the man who was so seriously sick, up out of his bed?" I instantly sensed that the effects of the Sacrament in this case were completely effective, as God had willed. "No," I replied, "I did not raise that man out of his bed. Mere man does not have this power. God did that. Didn't I tell you, the scripture says: 'If any man is sick among you, call in the Priest of the Church, and the prayers of the faith shall save the sick man, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him, and if God so wills, he will raise him up, bodily'." Still, I did not see the man get up out of bed. About nine days after this happened, the man got out of prison and made a bee-line to see me. I was taking the Pastor's place for a few days in the old frame Catholic Church in Raleigh. Seeing him coming towards me, I said to him, "Tell me what happened?" "Boss, don't you know?" "No, I do not." "Well, I came to and saw you standing over me reading out of the Bible." Well, I did not have a Bible in my hand but I had a prayer-book with Bible prayers in it. "I did not see you come to as I was looking at the fellow sick prisoners and after saying goodbye to them, I went out." The man got up after I left the room.

In my close association with Father Price at Nazareth, I became fully aware not only of his intense desire to sacrifice himself for the conversion of his native state, but also of his burning desire to offer himself voluntarily to work on the foreign missions. I recall him saying to me at one time, "Billy, suppose you knew that they needed priests to work as missionaries in the Philippines —would you voluntarily offer to go there?" I said to him that I was going to stick to North Carolina to the end. He knew of Father Walsh's attraction to the Foreign Missions from reading "The Field Afar," of which Father Walsh was the editor. Father

Walsh also knew of Father Price's attraction and love for the Foreign Missions. They met for the first time at the Eucharistic Congress in Montreal, Canada. I was in Buffalo at the time collecting for a school in Durham, N. C., and joining Father Price and Father Irwin there in 1910. Then in Montreal, Father Walsh and Father Price planned and mentally laid the Foundation of the Foreign Mission Society. It met with the hearty approbation of Cardinal Gibbons, the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States. It was the will of the American hierarchy that these two kindred souls should go to Rome and get the official approbation of the Holy Father for the founding of the American Society for the Foreign Missions. The Holy Father, Pius X, gave his hearty approval of the American Foreign Mission Society and his special blessing to the two founders.

The formation, development and growth of the new American Foreign Mission Society naturally would require the better part of the time and intent of the two founders. Yet Father Price could not forget his first love, his apostolic foundation for the conversion of souls in his native state. He had hoped to give three weeks of his time to the apostolic foundation of Maryknoll and one week to his foundation at Nazareth. His bishop, Bishop Haid, O.S.B., told him to give one week to Maryknoll and three weeks to Nazareth, and if he would give three weeks to Maryknoll, he would appoint another priest to take charge of Nazareth. Father Price well knew that it would be a sacrifice of a lifetime if he would choose to give the major part of the time to the development and formation of the Maryknoll foundation with Father Walsh, yet he felt that within his conscience he was doing the Will of God in choosing the work of Maryknoll as he would be in a position to work for the greater honor and glory of God, in His world-wide Kingdom. In the new regime of Nazareth, Father Price did not feel that he was welcome, at the monument which was his, in virtue of his long years of labor, sacrifice and prayer. He brought the great merit of his cross and self-sacrifice, in leaving Nazareth, to the inception and development of Maryknoll, that has now become the greatest world-wide propagation Society in the Church. Making a visit to him at Maryknoll, I remarked to him that the orphanage which he founded was being supported but the apostolic work connected with it has ceased. His reply to me was, "Billy, I am out of that now and have left all to Almighty God to work out all things there according to His Holy Will."

A short time after Father Price had led the first band of young priests to China from Maryknoll, I asked Father Irwin to go with me to see Cardinal Gibbons in Baltimore, in reference to Nazareth.

Father Irwin did not go, but he assured me that he admired me in going to see the Cardinal. While I was speaking to his Eminence, Cardinal Gibbons, he said to me in an advisedly and fatherly way, "I would not oppose my bishop." I assured him that the thought of opposing my bishop did not enter my mind and that I came to see him for information and guidance. "What, your Eminence, if there was a possibility of apostolic mission work continuing at Nazareth, as a center?" "In that case get the signature of your bishop," he replied. Immediately and clearly, I divined the situation. For a proper solution, it would be wise to see my bishop which I hastened to do, after I left the Cardinal's residence. Bishop Haid, shortly after his consecration in 1888, urged my father to send me to Belmont. When I was in the seminary, I served the Bishop's Mass in the private Chapel with Thomas Oistreich, who afterwards became Father Thomas, O.S.B., and studied at Rome becoming a distinguished professor and scholar. Bishop Haid was also my professor in moral theology and ordained me. In my conversation with him, the question of his signature not being on the property of Nazareth came up. He stated clearly that his signature, as bishop, was not on the property purchased at Nazareth. I said to him, "Bishop, I think it would be a good move to put your signature on the existing document now, and come out into the state, and all the priests would rally around you." He replied that he was too old for that and would keep Nazareth intact as it is. After the death of Father Price in China, the bishop called me to meet him in Raleigh, with Father Wood, who he had appointed to be superintendent of the Nazareth orphanage. Father Irwin was not at the meeting. At the meeting, Nazareth was turned over to the Vicariate. This was not done legally. The thought of challenging the procedure, in the absence of any possible procedure at the present moment or in the future, did not enter our minds, as the present moral motivating thoughts of all concerned, were in unison for the general good of the administration of the Vicariate.

About two weeks after the Apostolic House, dedicated to the Queen of the Apostles at Nazareth was destroyed by a mysterious fire in the fall of 1905, I began mentally to perceive, and finally was convinced that Father Price was providentially chosen by God to be instrumental, to do a special work in His Church. My conviction stemmed from the following memorable event. Of the destructive building only the outer brick walls remained standing, and Father Price did not lose any time in calling the young students to assist him in constructing what may be termed a battering ram, made up of a large, long log, to be propelled to and fro on wheels, to hit the walls with a concentrated force from a safety

point of their own planning. It became evident to me that Father Price's unusual activity in this form was to make it possible to note the whereabouts of the cornerstone among the debris. After this surprising and herculean job was completed, which I had been watching from across the road on the porch of the old frame orphanage house, Father Price came to me and said, "The cornerstone of the building is over there." I instantly thought why didn't he pick it up. He was there and knew where it was, and was better able to get it than I was, as I was not physically perfect in body as yet, after my jump from the third-story window. However, after a few moments I was on my way over there, looked over the debris and returned, and told him that I could not find it. Father Price went over the second time and said to me, "The cornerstone is surely there," because he had seen it. I then made a more thorough search and found it. Opening the box, placed in the cornerstone, I found a letter he had written, dated April 21, 1902. I did not tell him that I had opened the box and found the letter he had written and put in the box before he blessed it, nor did he ask me about it in all the days, months and years he lived till he died in China on September 12, 1919, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary. I still have this letter in my possession. Father Price was in charge of Nazareth until 1911, the year he left to give his full time to Maryknoll. I was appointed by my bishop to be pastor of Durham, North Carolina, in 1907. In 1921, I wrote a brief outline of Father Price's life for the magazine, *Field Afar,* which was published in Boston and edited by Father Walsh, later Bishop Walsh. In my letter on Father Price's life, I quoted in full the letter that he wrote on April 21, 1902, and placed in the cornerstone of the building that was destroyed by fire in the Fall of 1905. The letter on Father Price's life and in which is his letter that he had put in the cornerstone, is quoted as follows:

FATHER THOMAS F. PRICE

By MSGR. WILLIAM F. O'BRIEN
(From THE FIELD AFAR — June, 1921)

"The ancestors of Thomas Frederick Price were among the early emigrants from England who settled in North Carolina. The home of the family, on the maternal side was near Bath, the oldest town in the state. A member of the family was an officer in the War of the Revolution. The mother of Fr. Price was a Miss Clara Bond, a fervent convert to our Holy Faith. The Bonds and Prices are old and respected families living in the eastern part of North Carolina.

"Mr. Price, the father of Rev. Thomas Price, edited a newspaper in Washington, N. C., and subsequently became the well-known and able editor of the old reliable Wilmington *Journal*, at Wilmington, N. C., from 1848 to 1872. This paper, with its conscientious and conservative editor and loyal co-workers, answered the purpose of an institution to its interested and large patronage. After Mr. Price severed his connection with the paper, the mutual and sympathetic good-will between the editor and the people lagged, interest in the paper was gradually lost, and the publication ceased.

"Miss Bond, before her marriage to Mr. Price, had moved to Washington on the Pamlico River, a few miles above Bath. There she resided with friends, the family of Dr. Gallagher, one of the two or three devout Catholic families then living in the little city. Dr. Gallagher was a local physician who had moved some years before this time from Philadelphia to Washington. It was the thoroughly Catholic and edifying life of this family that first attracted Miss Clara Bond to our Holy Faith.

"After her marriage to Mr. Price in Washington, the devoted couple moved to Wilmington, and there Mrs. Price, very soon after her arrival, was received into the Catholic Church. Mr. Price also became a Catholic, but not until a short time before he died. God blessed this couple with seven or eight children, two of whom became religious in the Community of Our Lady of Mercy, founded by Bishop England, the first Bishop of Charleston, S. C. One of these two religious, Sister Mary Catherine, is still living at the Motherhouse in Belmont, N. C. She is one of the oldest members of the Community, well known for her zeal and great willingness to work for God's poor.

"Mrs. Price was by nature always very grateful. Not forgetting the first impressions she had received from the edifying lives of Dr. Thomas Frederick Gallagher and his devoted wife, she named one of her children in memory of the doctor, and this child was the future missioner of North Carolina and of China. The conscientious physician had preached the Faith by practically leading the life of an apostle in the midst of thousands of our separated brethren, when the profession of faith by a Catholic gentleman in a public position meant not only the loss of much desirable patronage, but also social ostracism.

"Mrs. Price is remembered in Wilmington as a very modest, saintly, and charitable woman. The venerable Msgr. Mackin, of St. Paul's Church, Washington, D. C., recalls that on one occasion, as a young sailor boy, he landed in Wilmington and, seek-

ing the Catholic Church, entered it to pray. While kneeling he noticed a very reverent and gracious lady fixing the altar. This lady, he afterwards learned, was Mrs. Price.

"Thomas Frederick Price never forgot the early training he received from his excellent mother. In the ages of faith, saintly mothers, even before they were married, prayed and promised that if God ever blessed them with offspring and their offspring were acceptable to Him, they would only too gladly consecrate them to God. Who can doubt that the sacrifices and prayers of this noble mother obtained from God the Vocation vouchsafed to her son?

"The saintly Fr. Mark Gross, whose good works and charities to God's poor are still remembered by the faithful and tried Catholics scattered over the Carolina missions, one day asked young Price if he intended studying for the priesthood. 'Yes, Father,' was the immediate reply. 'Thomas,' said the holy and zealous missioner, 'you should now say daily five Our Fathers and Hail Marys to become a good priest.' To this the boy replied, in the innocence that bespoke the wholesome personal influence of the reverent and saintly mother, that he had been saying the five Our Fathers and five Hail Marys for a long time to become a good priest.

"Devotion to the Immaculate Conception seemed to be the characteristic of all Fr. Price's labors in North Carolina. As a boy, I remember well the first years of Fr. Price's priesthood. Having headquarters at New Bern, he covered a mission territory of three hundred square miles. It was during his charge at New Bern, that he built the Immaculate Conception Church in Halifax, and Saint Mary's Church in Goldsboro.

"Holding a Fair at Goldsboro for the purpose of making a payment on the Church, reports were circulated that our separated brethren would not patronize it. This would mean a greater debt without any local means of raising sufficient funds, owing to the comparatively few Catholics. Notwithstanding this discouraging outlook, Fr. Gross wrote Fr. Price from Charlotte, foretelling that his Fair would be a great success, which in reality it proved to be.

"The virtues characteristic of Fr. Price as a missioner in North Carolina were humility, chastity, and apostolic zeal. He often used a stone for a pillow at night, and on rising chastised his body by inflicting stripes on himself with a lash; and his penance was sweetened by his childlike devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and his paternal consideration for others.

"The impression left upon the writer more vivid and lasting than others of his austere and beautiful life, was his regular hour for meditation and prayer. Rising as early as when a seminarian, he was methodical in his meditation, his office, his particular exam-

en, his spiritual reading, as also in his rosary and in reading the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin. This spirit of prayer, combined with the activities of a missionary, convinced the writer that Fr. Price was a much loved servant of God, ever ready to make any sacrifice, however hard to flesh and blood, so long as it was the will of God. I venture to say that this impression of a happy combination of the contemplative and active life deeply impressed other priests working with Fr. Price on the Carolina missions, as it did a goodly number of ecclesiastical students who labored during their holidays under his guidance and are now priests in the archdiocese of Baltimore, New York, and elsewhere.

"Anyone associated with Fr. Price in life can never forget him. As long as a pious, self-sacrificing, and studious priesthood is cherished in North Carolina, his memory will not be forgotten. Already pious souls are putting the works of God dear to their hearts under his patronage. The childlike confidence and faith among the faithful is not lightly to be despised, and who will run the risk of discouraging them in that feeling of confidence that is a source of spiritual consolation to their souls?

"The culminating work of Fr. Price's twenty-five years of labor in North Carolina was his foundation at Nazareth of a Priests' Apostolate and Orphanage. At one period Fr. Price was hesitating between entering the Society of Jesus or working for the conversion of his native state. The advice of the Jesuit Master of Novices was to stay at his apostolate, and this decision meant a command to him. He would give his whole soul and entire self to labor for his separated brethren.

"When Rt. Rev. Bishop Haid judged it advisable to obtain a headquarters, a beautiful hill, ideally located three miles west of Raleigh, the capitol of the state, was purchased. The name of Nazareth was given to this tract of three hundred acres, after the Government had established a Post Office there. Nazareth was dedicated and founded on a bright, fair and beautiful October morning in 1899, on the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary. The magazine *Truth,* now published in Brooklyn, N. Y., saw its beginning at Nazareth in the fertile mind of Fr. Price. With the aid of two associate priests, Fr. Price for a number of years sowed the seeds of our Holy Faith in a great number of souls in towns, hamlets, and in the country districts for miles around Nazareth as a center. A number of converts were the result of this work. The seed sown is not lost. The people still inquire to this day for these men who preached the Gospel among them; and they long for their return. A strong characteristic in Fr. Price was the determination to persevere in a work once begun; yet he was ever ready in mind and

soul to give it up if convinced that it was God's Holy Will that he should do so. This is clearly manifested in a letter written by Fr. Price seventeen years ago, with no expectation that it would appear again in his generation. In 1905 a destructive fire broke out at Nazareth and razed the Priests' House to the ground. A few days after, Fr. Price told the writer that the corner-stone was in the debris, and requested him to get it. Finding the copper metal box exposed and loose in the cornerstone, I opened it and found a letter written in Fr. Price's own hand. The letter, which I kept, explains the reason for Nazareth's existence, and at the same time shows Fr. Price's utter abondonment to the designs of Almighty God and his resignation in the event of a seeming human failure. The letter follows:

> This stone has been blessed by the Rev. Thomas F. Price, on April 21, 1902. The Rt. Rev. Leo Haid, O.S.B., D.D., was to have blessed it yesterday when blessing the cornerstone of the church, but omitted it through fatigue. All the children of the orphanage, thirty-two in number, participated, singing hymns, etc., as well as Frs. O'Brien, Irwin and Thomas Stapleton. This building begins the manifestation of a design for a religious order which has been held through many years of toil, sacrifice and prayer. If God blesses it to success (and may it fail if the Divine Majesty so desires), it will cover every diocese of the globe. This building is consecrated to the Queen of the Apostles in consequence of a vow made by the writer to our loved Blessed Mother that, if it comes to success, it would be hers—named after her. May Jesus, the sweetest love of our hearts, be praised, adored, and blessed forever! May our loved Mother be praised and blessed forever! — T. F. Price.

"The Apostolate has not been made perpetual, but the experience and rich traditions of the days of the Apostolate's existence still remain. The Orphanage founded by Fr. Price is now flourishing. The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, which he built, is in good condition. The present rector of the church and the superior of Nazareth, Rev. George A. Woods, felt urged to come to North Carolina and work in the interest of Fr. Price's apostolic foundation. It was Fr. Price who sent Fr. Woods to the Belmont Seminary as an ecclesiastic student, and who, in consequence of this step under God, like a good angel prepared the way for the ordination of Fr. Woods. In addition, Fr. Price left the future means of support of his foundation at Nazareth: 'The Orphan Boys' Magazine' and

'Devotions to St. Anthony.' The writer recalls getting out the matter for the first issue of 'The Orphan Boy' and starting the first novena to St. Anthony under Fr. Price's direction.

"To the eternal credit of Fr. George A. Woods and his brother, Fr. Matthew Woods, not an orphan is refused admittance, nor a stone left unturned, nor an hour wasted in their work to feed and care for, by their personal labor, more than a hundred little children. They work with their hands as well as their minds. All at Nazareth must 'root, hog, or die,' as there is no revenue to be had in the state where churches are few and where the comparatively few Catholics are heavily taxed to support their own local churches, pastors, schools, and other good works. The appeal for aid must of necessity be made to charitable Catholics outside the state.

"If a man is to be judged by lasting and imperishable work, accomplished often in solitude and in apostolic desolation of soul, in poverty-stricken field, then few laborers, if any, in the Carolina missions surpassed Fr. Price in permanent fruits of holiness of life and in enduring apostolic work. 'By their fruits you shall know them.'

"The same characteristic devotion to the Immaculate Mother, and the same spirit of self-abandonment to Almighty God, manifested in the life of Fr. Price in North Carolina were also clearly evident in his work as co-founder, with Fr. Walsh, of the American Foreign Mission Seminary at Maryknoll. The various sisterhoods can testify to his interest in getting the present and future generations of Catholics in the United States, through the children in the school, to realize more the illimitable and celestial beauties of The Immaculate Mother through the study of Bernadette of Lourdes, whose simple life was but a reflection of the Immaculate Conception, the chosen patroness of the United States.

"We venture to predict that the future historian, in writing of the first missioners who went to China from Maryknoll, will record the spirit of self-sacrificing zeal manifested by the vanguard of Maryknollers; and this, in no small measure, will be due to the personal offering of an elder and more experienced brother, Fr. Price, who, if he was not a martyr in reality, was one in desire.

"While Fr. Price was laboring in China, he did not, nor could he, forget his old associates and the land of his first love, which he left so filled with his apostolic labors. Under date of July 27, 1919, he writes:

> MY DEAR FATHER:—I have been intending to write to you ever since I came out here, but you know how that is when you have so many things pressing on you. Since we came here, more than two thousand pagans have given in

their names for instruction. Our work here promises to be quite successful and I trust you will pray that it may be so. We feel greatly our dependence on God, for we can do little or nothing ourselves; the circumstances force this truth on us. In a short time I expect to get out a monthly letter to be sent to my friends to let them know all about the work and I will not fail to send you a copy. Remember me to the sisters and all who have not forgotten me. Tell them that I pray for them and trust they will pray for me. Again and again, dear Billy, may God and our Immaculate Mother bless you to the fullest! Pray for me.

"The letter from which I have taken a few extracts, was received just three days before Fr. Price died. God called him to rest from his labors. He has found his life with God, for having lost it with God. His good works follow him. We feel that he is nearer to us than ever. He is a part of ourselves. He is like an angel who goes before us to prepare our way. If our work in the past or in the future can be designated as apostolic it is because it was and will be inseparable from his personal holiness of life and the spirit of the enduring reality of his labors, sensed around and about us.

"In conclusion, there is one prominent virtue, dear to Our Lord and to His Blessed Mother, that I do not wish to omit, and which is, to those who knew Fr. Price, synonymous with his life and name. It appeals to the heart. To us it is a proof that he felt he was following God's holy will at all times in whatever field he labored. It is his love of holy poverty. This was exemplified in his life, and to us it crowns him as one of God's own. The Church in North Carolina shares not a little in the merits of a humble man who sought not his own ease and comfort, but only the interest of his Master, Who 'had no place to lay His head'."

A few years after Father Price died in China, Bishop Walsh made a visit to Durham to see me, in order to get as much information about Father Price as possible concerning his apostolic labors in North Carolina. On that visit, he gave me the history of why Father Price wore the ring of Bernadette, the confidante of the Blessed Virgin. Sometime before he and Father Price had an appointment to see St. Pius X to get his approval of the American Foreign Mission Society, Father Price spent a considerable amount of time, in deep devotion, at the Shrine of Lourdes. He even got acquainted with Bernadette's brother and slept in the same room with him. He also made a visit to the convent at Namur, where Bernadette lived as a nun, and prayed long at her tomb. The Reverend Mother Superior at the convent, was deeply impressed with his apparently serafic devotion to the saintly confidante of the

Blessed Virgin, Bernadette. In truth, to her own satisfaction, she was convinced that there was a mystical union between Father Price and Bernadette. For this reason, she gave Father Price the ring that Bernadette wore as a nun which was a symbol of her espousels to Mary's Son. I have seen a rubber band on the finger of Father Price which he wore to cover the ring. Father Price, after this time, when writing his signature signed himself as Bernadette Price and willed that his body be buried near the tomb of Bernadette at Namur, France.

After Father Walsh and Father Price had received the approval of the Maryknoll Foundation, by Pope St. Pius X, they returned to Maryknoll with grateful hearts, and only a little time was supposed to pass before they were speaking of the great Papal blessing and approval of Pius X on their new Foundation, to their students. A few days after the joy of that first meeting of the Founders and students, Father Price, in speaking to them in a classroom, spoke of the gift of Bernadette's ring from the Reverend Superior of the Convent in Namur, France, when suddenly one of the students said, "Father Price, how do you know you have a right to wear that ring?" This question struck Father Price as a bolt coming out of the blue. Knowing Father Price, I can understand how any student would put a question to him of that nature, as all students were put at ease in his presence. His gentle disposition seemed to inspire confidence and invite questions even of a confidential nature. For his own satisfaction and the satisfaction of the Maryknoll student, Fr. Price consulted with Fr. Walsh, who in turn referred the question to Rome. The answer to Fr. Walsh's communication was that Fr. Price should not wear the ring. The letter from Rome came at the time when Fr. Walsh and Fr. Price were in a state of rejoicing, even spiritual rejoicing, as all Maryknoll was preparing to be led by Father Price as the first missionaries to enter China, so much so, that Father Walsh could not even get a thought out of his mind to tell Father Price the contents of that letter he had received from Rome. The co-founders and young missionaries still in spirit in the third heaven, Father Price left in good faith wearing the ring of Bernadette and he continued to wear it until his death, as he was not told otherwise. He died on September 12, 1919, the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, wearing in good faith the ring of Bernadette the confidante of the Blessed Virgin, and with whom there was a possible mystical union.

When Father Price died, the Reverend Mother of the convent of Namur was disappointed because the bishop of China, in the province when Father Price died, did not send his body to Namur but the bishop did send his heart to Namur and his body to Maryknoll where it is now interred in the same tomb with the body of Bishop Walsh, as co-founder of Maryknoll.

In 1955 I made a visit to a cousin, Father Thomas Adams, of the Capuchin Order, pastor of the Church of St. Charles Borremeo in St. Louis, Mo., and while there I visited the Maryknoll novitiate for Sisters at Valley Park, only a few miles outside of the limits of the City of St. Louis. The Sisters had never seen Father Price and wanted to hear all they could about his life. After I had spoken at the Mass, the Reverend Superior came to me and related how she was stationed at Maryknoll when Father Price's body arrived. It was raining in torrents, but as the body arrived on the grounds, the sun came out and shone brilliantly and peace and calm pervaded the surroundings. Shortly after I arrived home from St. Louis, I received a letter from a candidate at the novitiate in Valley Park who is a convert and was a doctor high on the staff of doctors at Duke University in Durham in which she wrote that when I spoke of the letter taken from the cornerstone of the Apostolic House at Nazareth, written by Father Price, a peculiar feeling came over her and she felt that some day the Maryknollers would have an important place in North Carolina in honor of Father Price.

At the urging of Cardinal O'Connell, when he and Father Price were students together in Baltimore, Father Price revealed to him that the Blessed Virgin appeared to him when he was shipwrecked off the coast of Wilmington when he was coming to the Seminary. In the letter he put in the cornerstone that he naturally thought would not be found, perhaps in centuries, he writes of a vow he made to the Blessed Virgin to establish a missionary Order to cover all the diocese of the world and to be named after her and may it fail if the Divine Majesty so desires. The construction of the building at Nazareth, the association of priests and students who cooperated with him at Nazareth, in his toil, labor and sacrifice of twenty-five years, was to him the first manifestation of a design of God's Holy Will in North Carolina. Yet, the venture to establish a missionary Order in North Carolina did not succeed but he was not disheartened, as he had written, "may it fail if the Divine Majesty so desires." The crucifixion of Christ was not a failure, nor was the cross that Father Price took up for Mary's sake a failure. His merits of struggling against poverty and affliction was an invaluable experience as a co-founder of Maryknoll. The Maryknollers are indeed serving to fill every diocese of the globe as veterans of Maryknollers practically claim today. They labor in China, Japan, Philippines, South America and in the home missions of our own beloved country. The foundation of the society of Maryknoll was the first united effort made by the Catholic Church in the United States and this American Foreign Mission Society was founded by Bishop Walsh and Father Price.

The First Church of the Immaculate Conception
Erected and Dedicated 1906

St. Mary's Catholic School and Kindergarten
Erected 1913; removed 1956 for new Church

CHAPTER IV

When Bishop Haid appointed me, in September 1907, as the first resident pastor in Durham, I had been chaplain of the Nazareth orphanage that Father Price founded for seven years with the exception of seven months in 1903, when I went to relieve Father Patrick Marrin in Fayetteville, and about three months on the Goldsboro mission in 1905, to take the place of Father Wherty during his indisposition.

There were a number of Missions attached to Durham in 1907. They included Henderson, Norlina, Littleton, Roanoke Rapids, Halifax, Weldon, Crowell's Cross Roads, Penitentiary Farm, Scotland Neck and Enfield. I said Mass in Durham three Sundays in the month and the fourth Sunday and the days of the week I would give to the Missions, and when there were five Sundays in the month I would devote that Sunday and the days of the week to the Missions.

As I believe I have a moderate flair for history, several of these missions claimed my special interest, as they have had an historical setting of devoted pioneers and apostolic workers who were blessed in their descendants in having vocations to the sisterhoods. In Scotland Neck, there was a church built there, before the War Between the States. I have stood on the ruins of the church, in the fall of 1907. James Farrell, who had a brother, nephew and niece in Raleigh who were among the devoted workers of the struggling church there in the 70's and 80's, built the church in Scotland Neck before there was a Vicar-Apostolic residing in North Carolina. The property on which the church was built was deeded to Georgetown University though none of the officials of the University knew of the existence of such a deed. The value of the small lot on which the church was built, however, was worth a little more than nil and in time was plowed over by a local farmer. Nearby were two or three graves where the children of James Farrell were buried. The widow of James Farrell taught school in Scotland Neck, and with her daughter, entered the Community of the Visitation, in Baltimore. They were known as Sister Mary de Sales and Sister Mary Augustine. A number of the pupils who were taught and instructed by these two devoted Sisters, followed them to the Visitation Convent and finished their education there.

Another Mission I was always glad to visit was the little Immaculate Conception Church in Halifax, the first church built by Father Price. The lady in charge of the church in Halifax in 1907, was Mrs. McMahon, a niece of James Farrell of Scotland Neck and the grandmother of Miss Nannie Gary who attended the church

there and looked after the needs of the priests in their monthly visits for a number of years. She still attends the little church across the yard from her home that her grandparents attended and which she has known from childhood, save now she attends and is present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in the little church, full of sweet memories of the past, and by necessity, physically present in a wheel-chair. Mrs. McMahon, who was so devoted to the cares of the church and its needs, would speak of cherished memories she had, of devoted and zealous missionaries who came to Halifax in the past and of their pleasant experiences in the neighborhood. She remembered the days when Bishop Gibbons was Vicar-Apostolic of North Carolina and who became the Archbishop of Baltimore and Cardinal Priest of Holy Church. When Father Price was a young priest he used to confide in her as a mother, telling her how he had intended to see Bishop Haid and speak about the establishment of a Missionary center and the formation of a band of missionary priests for the conversion of their native state, North Carolina. Mr. James Farrell, of Scotland Neck, was the brother of Miss Gary's great-grandfather, Michael Farrell, whose tomb I often visited in Halifax. One of Michael Farrell's daughters, a Miss McGuire, lived in Littleton during her married life. She had a daughter who became a Ursiline nun in Columbia, South Carolina, and was elected the Reverend Mother Superior of the Community. She was known as Mother Clare Agnes. As I was interested very much in the Farrell family and in the growth of Catholicity in North Carolina from its infancy, I made several visits to Columbia to see Mother Clare Agnes. Mother Clare Agnes was the first cousin of Miss Nannie Gary's mother. The late wife of Mr. Dan Edwards, a former mayor of Durham, was the great-niece of Mother Clare Agnes.

A family I generally looked forward to attending, was the Fitzpatrick family, living at Crowell's Cross Roads, about nine miles from Halifax. This family was very loyal and had a deep love for the church. In the several towns in comparatively close proximity to their house, they were highly respected, and were influential with the social leaders of their several communities. In all dealings with their non-Catholic neighbors, they were motivated consciously or unconsciously by their deep faith. While many of their non-Catholic friends were sincere in their beliefs, their belief in the sincere attachment of the Fitzpatrick family to their faith was not to be questioned. The Fitzpatricks were natives of Baltimore, and had purchased about one thousand acres of good farming land at Crowell's Cross Roads. Tradition has it that the name of Crowell was given the Cross Roads there, in memory of the army of General Cornwallis passing through on his way to Yorktown, Vir-

ginia. Mr. Fitzpatrick was associated with a business firm in Baltimore and was for a time a local magistrate in his district in which Crowell's Cross Roads was located. Mrs. Fitzpatrick was a convert of a socially prominent Baltimore family. Of the five children, three are living, Sudie, James and Marie. The eldest, Miss Sudie Fitzpatrick, has inherited the business acumen of her father and the energy of her mother. In addition to managing her large productive farm, she is active in welfare and social affairs. She is past ex-president of the Red Cross in Halifax County, and enjoys the respect and esteem of a large group of friends and acquaintances.

When the Fitzpatrick family first settled in Crowell's, they attended Mass in Halifax. Shortly after, however, the priest in charge of the Halifax mission, visited and said Mass in their house. A few years later several missions were added to the north and west of Durham; Msgr. Arthur Freeman, as pastor of Goldsboro and Msgr. John Manly as his assistant, took care of the Halifax mission. During those years, when the Halifax missions were attended from Goldsboro, or shortly after, the Fitzpatricks built a little church within a stone's throw from their house so Mass could be said in it and as it was generally the custom of large landowners in rural districts in North Carolina, they selected a special plot of ground which they used as the family burial ground and in which Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpatrick and several of their children are buried.

Miss Sudie Fitzpatrick now attends Mass in Scotland Neck, about twelve miles distant from Crowell's. For a long time there was only one Catholic family living in Scotland Neck in the early nineteenth century, the Dunn family. The grandmother was a Bostonian of refinement and her daughter, Mrs. Dunn, lived in Petersburg, Va., for a few years and then moved to Scotland Neck. The priest was always welcomed into her home. Her house was a house for priests. Mrs. Dunn was blessed with several children. Six of her children were very much devoted to the church and one daughter attended St. Mary's Episcopal School in Raleigh, and after graduation married the mayor of Scotland Neck.

The mission at Penitentiary Farm, near Tilley, N. C., was a mission of which I have fond recollections. The official in charge was Captain Rhemn, of New Bern. He was an Episcopalian as was his charming wife who was also from New Bern. They knew my father, who lived in New Bern for four years, and they always gave me a heartfelt welcome and could not do too much for me in arranging to have the two or three Catholic parishioners that were there, attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and to see that I was served with hot coffee after Mass. Captain Rhemn, in appearance resembled Gen. Robert E. Lee about to perfection. The re-

semblance was so remarkable, not only in my own judgment, but of all his acquaintances and of all who met him for the first time. There was the same dignity in his person and character, the same facial expression, the same contour and height. It is true, I have never seen Gen. Robert E. Lee in the flesh, as did many other of his acquaintances, but they have seen, as well as I, the photographs of Gen. Lee. His wife was a Miss Bryan related to the present family of Bryans in New Bern. There are many Bryans in the eastern part of North Carolina, and who are almost wholly descendents of Captain William O'Brien, who settled in Edenton, N. C., after the fall of Limerick, in Ireland, to the English. William Jennings Bryan of Omaha, Nebraska, who was a brilliant orator and a candidate for the Presidency about three times, was a descendant of Captain William O'Brien, and who said himself, that his grand ancestor settled in Edenton in 1691, after the fall of Limerick.

I have very pleasant recollections of the town of Enfield, on the Atlantic Coast Line. Mrs. Britt, a fervent convert, who lived there was blessed with a number of devoted children who always looked forward to the visits made to their home by the priest. Mrs. Britt often spoke of the visits that Bishop Gibbons and Father Gross made in the past to Enfield and vicinity, and remarked that she had rather see Father Price than the President of the United States. In preparation to get sizable crowds of non-Catholics to attend the town hall, where I would preach in the evening, I would personally place placards in the stores, to announce the hour of prayer and evening preaching. Two converts, Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Browne, who came from Georgia and settled in Enfield, when I visited there, are now living in Rocky Mount. A daughter of Mrs. Britt, now Mrs. Lewis, is also living in Rocky Mount.

The denominational lines in Weldon, N. C., seemed to be hard drawn—I spoke several times in a public hall there. I felt that I had a friendly group of listeners, and a few influential friends in the audience at that special meeting. However, I was made to realize that I had one disagreeable listener in the Hall, and I would like to think that he was the only one, as he made it his unpleasant duty to be present at the depot when I was about to board the train for Durham, to say within the hearing of all present there that "he could kick himself for going out to hear that damn priest." "Silence was golden," on my part at that time. "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." We poor mortals need some prayers when temptation threatens to distrub our peace of soul.

When I first attended the Halifax missions, Roanoke Rapids and Rosemary, two towns were closely joined together, there was

not a single Catholic in either town. After I had been seeking out there for a stray Catholic, who I was told was living there, and who I did not succeed in locating, I made my way to the Weldon Depot, and while standing there as a train was moving in the direction of Rosemary, a member of a Catholic family that was moving from Maryland to Rosemary, called out to the rest of the family on the train that she saw a priest standing at the Weldon depot. This was comforting to that family as I learned after a few days, as they were looking forward to enjoying the blessings of their religion. Not many days passed when I was under the roof of this devoted and happy family of Mr. and Mrs. Fisher from Elicott City, Maryland. Mr. Fisher was an expert shoemaker and lost no time to open up a repair shoe shop which was needed there at that time and was well patronized. The family was blessed with a number of children. The eldest boy was a foreman in the mill. He soon married and had the happiness of seeing his wife received into the church. The other children were employed in the cotton mill. On my monthly visit, the family would rise at 4:30 A.M., would go to confession and receive Holy Communion at the 5:30 A.M. Mass. This arrangement was made so that they could get their breakfast without rushing and to be at the mill to begin work at 7:00 A.M. I baptized two or three in the family. I met several members of the family after they were grown up and married at a Corpus Christi celebration at Nazareth, some years after I attended Rosemary. The church there has grown rapidly. A church and rectory was built during the pastorate of Msgr. Peter McNerney who is now the pastor of St. Mary's Church in Wilmington; has made much progress during the pastorates of Fathers Denges and Tevlin. I like to think that the example of Christian Faith, given by the Fisher family in Rosemary, was not forgotten by Our Lord, Who has a long memory, has blessed the mission that was so pleasing to Him in the beginning, with good Pastors who built up the church there.

I said Mass for a number of years in Littleton, where the ancestors of the Vaughn family lived long before the days of Bishop Gibbons who afterwards became Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore, wrote of the family in his memoirs. Sister Mary Clare Agnes McGuire who became the Mother Superior of the Ursuline Sisters in Columbia, South Carolina, was born there. I administered the sacraments to a lady who traveled twenty miles to the church and who was the daughter of a minister in Littleton.

On my way to Durham, returning from the missions in the northeast of the State, I often stopped at Norlina to say Mass there, in the Upchurch family home living there in 1907. When this family moved to Durham in 1909, I baptized the mother and children; the

father was received into the church several years later. Struggling to carry on the support of a school I had started in Durham, with a small number of children, paying a dollar a month for tuition, I was much encouraged in the sacrifice of the children of converts, in the increase of the pupils in our school. To help encourage the three mission-minded Dominican Sisters from Newburg, N. Y., in 1909, the year the little school began in an humble one-story frame building, consisting of six small rooms including the kitchen and dining room which they used as a community room. I said to the Sisters during the month of October when the number of children registered fifteen, that you have received fifteen pupils representing the fifteen decades of the rosary, to which you are so devoted.

When I first went to Henderson, there were only three families living there. One of these families was the pioneer family of the O'Neils. Mr. O'Neil owned and managed a furniture store in the city. I was especially interested in the marriage of a Mr. Macon, a descendant of Nathaniel Macon to Miss Gertrude O'Neil, a daughter of Mr. O'Neil. Nathaniel Macon was chairman of the House of Commons in Raleigh in 1835, when Judge Gaston made his famous address that won the favor of a large majority in the convention of the members of the various denominations, in having the laws stricken from the books proscribing Catholic citizens from holding office in the State of North Carolina.

Father Lagle, the first resident priest in Henderson, acted as a quasi-assistant to me in my work in Durham. As the collections were meagre in Henderson, I used to send my janitor in my auto to bring Father Lagle over to Durham and return, ninety miles in all, to say my first Mass, so I could say my first Mass in Chapel Hill and return to Durham to celebrate my second Mass.

I loved to visit the families living on the Missions, attended from Durham, in the northeastern part of the state, and thought of suggesting to my Bishop, at one time, to let me work these Missions and appoint another priest to take care of Durham, but reflecting on my second thought, I realized that I had started a struggling school, with a few children, and it was my duty to remain in Durham to work to see the school increase in numbers as the school is the foundation of the permanence and growth of a parish.

As the priests increased in the state, younger priests took over the Missions northeast of Durham which enabled me to have Mass on all the Sundays of the month with week-day Missions at Hillsboro, Efland, Mebane, Creedmoor, Oxford, Bullock and Roxboro. To my Mission in Chapel Hill, I gave one of my Sunday Masses.

In the application of the simple rules of logic, a Missionary would stultify himself if he approved, mentally, of a system of religions other than the one God established; in other words it would be a mental absurdity to believe in two religions. We are living in a world that is, and we must take into account, conditions, circumstances and mental attitudes in mankind that is, in the age in which we live. In a Missionary's experience, he is often impressed by devout, good-living and prayerful people of good faith who are not physical members of the true church. As an example, the following illustration is one of the experiences that I had as a Missionary:

In 1907, there were two Catholic families living in Hillsboro, the native converts, Mr. and Mrs. Strange and the Parrish family. Mrs. Parrish was a Miss Dunn before her marriage. She moved from Baltimore to Hillsboro in the early 80's. Her husband was a native of Hillsboro, a member of the Presbyterian Church and a Mason. They were blessed with several children and Mr. Parrish fully consented to the children being brought up in the Catholic faith. About the year 1909, Mr. Parrish was taken seriously ill and permitted his wife to baptize him before he died. Mrs. Parrish phoned me that she had baptized her husband before he died, as I was in the midst of the preparation for the Lenten services during Holy Week. I phoned that I would come to her home immediately. On my arrival, I was ushered into the room where the casket containing the body of Mr. Parrish was, and to my sudden surprise I saw that I was in the midst of the members of the Masonic Order in full regalia and they were there to take over the burial service. Quickly thinking that it would be detrimental to Christian charity to absent myself from the room, I took out my liturgial book and asked a prominent Mason whom I knew to be a leader in the community, if it was time to begin. He replied indifferently, that he supposed so. Without any hesitation, I read a psalm and a few prayers appropriate to a burial service and then spoke a few words to them in explanation of why I came and the reason why I had said the prayers for the soul of Mr. Parrish. I was deeply impressed with their evident attention and even in their reverence in listening. After I had finished speaking, a violent storm broke out. In going to the cemetery, I was put in a carriage, and the Masons filed out of the house, two by two, in their regalia, and marched along the sidewalk without umbrellas, drenched in the falling rain. Arriving at the cemetery before the Masons and their friends, I blessed the grave conditionally, and retired some distance behind the Masons who surrounded the grave, when to my surprise, when they had

finished, the Master Mason came to me and asked "if the Father would give the blessing," which I did to all who were present. When all was over, in the midst of a deep silence, a mourner came to me and said, "Father, did you see that rainbow?" My answer was, "No, I did not." "Why, it came near the grave, and you did not see it?" "God, as you know, put the rainbow in the heavens as a sign of peace, and if one wastes time here in bitter misgivings, especially about religion, one may as well get off the face of the earth."

In 1907, there was an elderly couple living in Hillsboro who were converts to the Faith, Mr. and Mrs. Strange. Mr. Strange lived to be ninety years of age. He became a convert during the War Between the States. He was influenced by the gentleness and self-sacrifice of the Sisters in caring for the wounded, lying helpless on the battlefield. Mrs. Strange was a Miss Floyd before her marriage, and a relative of the numerous Floyd family of Orange County, who were among the early pioneers who settled in North Carolina.

More than one of the influential citizens of Hillsboro have greeted me warmly since Mr. Parrish's funeral. Some years after the death of Mr. Parrish, I went into an annex room of a bank building in Durham for a rest, and heard a number of Hillsboro and Durham citizens speaking on topics that were of universal interest to them, that happened in the past. To my surprise, the subject of their conversation was the funeral of Mr. Parrish. Listening intently, I asked, "I wonder what became of that priest, mentioned in their conversation." And no one present seemed to know. "Well, I can tell you. That priest sits before you. I was the priest and have very pleasant recollections of all that happened."

In my mission at Oxford, I had a devoted family to the church in the Blair family. I received the father of the family, Mr. Blair, at the age of seventy years and baptized and married several members of the family. I had two very large funerals there, of Dr. and Mrs. Cogshall. Mrs. Cooper, the wife of a prominent banker and sister of an Episcopalian bishop, interested herself in getting up a choir which included several ministers. A doctor, governed by prejudicial traditions of the past in Oxford as he remembered them, said to me that Oxford was not in need of a Catholic Church. Today there is a beautiful church, a zealous pastor and a devoted congregation.

In the village of Bullock, about twelve miles north of Oxford near the Virginia and North Carolina border, I can never forget what to me were memorable and consoling missionary visits. A lady who owned and operated a restaurant near Oxford for a number of years, closed up her restaurant about the time that I first attended

the mission at Oxford and moved back to Baltimore, her native city, told me when leaving that she had an uncle living on a farm about two miles from Bullock Station, who had not attended church in forty years and that she was interested in him and regretted leaving but in her meagre financial condition, she had no other choice. I assured her that I would look up her uncle on my next visit. As the lady's uncle was also from Baltimore, I chose the twenty-sixth of September, 1908, the feast of the American Martyrs, and especially, as it was the thirty-second anniversary of my mother's death in Baltimore and who was buried in Bonnie Brae, now called the Cathedral Cemetery in Baltimore. I said Mass early that morning in the Dominican Convent chapel in the two-story building of the combination convent and school which I had prayed for, begged for, and built in 1913, and which has been torn down to make room for the new Immaculate Conception Church which is really beautiful, especially the interior, to the Catholics and non-Catholics of Durham. Many non-Catholics of the city say that the church is the most beautiful church that they have ever been in. "Mother," I opined in thought when I left for Bullock Station that morning, "let me see where you are going to lead me, as I am going to search for a 'lost sheep' from Baltimore, in Mary's Land, where you lived and died."

Arriving by train in Oxford, I had a boy to drive me to Bullock Station and then on through thickly wooded forest to a farm for which we were seeking according to a description given to us. Finding an old unpainted country house with no other house in the near neighborhood, I inquired about the whereabouts of the uncle of the lady from Baltimore. In conversation with his wife, I learned that he was not at home and that he believed in a religion not known by any people in that region and that she knew little or nothing about his religion.

On returning to Bullock Station, I saw a bewhiskered man, driving a wagon, who precisely fitted the description given me by his niece. As we were driving in opposite directions, I judged that we would meet at a little creek flowing in the thickly wooded forest, over which we could see a few spots of the azure blue sky between the tall trees. Getting out of the buggy, I approached him as he stopped his wagon and said, "There is no need of introducing myself to you." Looking at me in evident surprise and even reverently, he got off his wagon and said, "No, Father, you do not need to introduce yourself to me, I have been praying for this." "Praying for this?" I replied, thinking of his being outside the church for forty years and being married outside the church. When I said to him, "Praying for this?" it seemed to hurt him. "Why yes, Father,

I have been praying to the Blessed Virgin ever since my first child was born that all my children would be taught and brought up in the Catholic faith." To my surprise, he spoke with so much unction, in mentioning the Blessed Virgin, that I took off my hat in the forest, under the blue canopy of heaven, and asked him where he was taught to have such devotion to the Blessed Virgin. He answered, "Father, when I was a little boy in Baltimore, I went to a wonderful Brothers' School and a good Brother taught our class, that no matter where you go and in all circumstances in life, always pray to the Blessed Virgin and she will always answer your prayers." Telling me of the school that he went to and to which I attended, myself, I asked him if he knew several of the Brothers I mentioned, he thought I had dropped from the clouds. I could well appreciate and fully understand his perservering, fervent devotion to the Blessed Virgin as I can well recollect a good Xaverian Brother in Baltimore putting an extreme case of the salvation of a man to the class and requiring an answer. The case was: If a man remained away from the church for a good number of years and refused to call for a priest when dying, could he save his soul? The decision of the class was that he would not save his soul. The Brother then said to the class, "Yes, boys, there is one chance, and this is it. We can pray to the Blessed Virgin that the heart of the hardened sinner be changed." On further investigation, I found that the "lost sheep" was not vicious at anytime and was really not responsible for his not attending church. He was an orphan boy and obtained work from an agent representing a lumber company in the far northeast of the United States after he left school, and there was no church or friend within a hundred miles of the camp where he worked and had worked for years. He had some years on his shoulders when he turned up in a primitive place in North Carolina at least fifty miles from a Catholic church, was land poor, did not have the convenience and the wherewith to go to church, and had married a simple, native country woman.

I made several visits to his home and gave his children some instruction. On my last visit to his home, I found him seriously ill, and in my judgement could not live more than two or three days. Realizing his condition I said to him, "John, have you spoken to your wife that before you can get absolution in confession, that you are obliged to have your marriage blessed?" "No, Father, I have not," he replied. "Do you mind if I speak to your wife for you?" For which he was glad I did. Calling his wife, I explained to her his desire to confess his sins and that he could not do this and get forgiveness until his marriage had been blessed. As a loving wife she said, out of the fullness of her heart, that she was ready

to do what John wanted her to do. As the church does not oblige a priest to ask for a dispensation to a mixed marriage when a person is dying, I had them both join hands and repeat their nuptial consent from the beginning and blessed the marriage. In addition to receiving absolution, I anointed him and a few days later I had his burial services in a country schoolhouse about a mile and a half from his home, and explained the teachings of the church to the whole countryside. I intended to keep up my visits to the community but I received a letter from a minister letting me know that I was not wanted in that community and that he could take care of all of them. I met a good number of ministers and found a few companionable and some who were more or less congenial, and if a few may have been unpleasant, this one in all my experience, in his narrowness of mind, his uncharitableness, his false zeal, without knowledge, was certainly an outstanding and exceptional one.

The venerable foundress of the Discalced Carmelite Order tells us that when her father died when she was a child, she took St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus and patron of the universal church, as her father and that she never remembered asking him, through his powerful intercession, for a favor that was not granted. Like many souls whose earthly mothers were called out of this world in their childhood have chosen Mary, the Mother of Jesus, for their heavenly mother. In an association of ideas, with this thought, I asked my earthly mother to lead me to a "lost sheep" on her birthday, I could have well applied to our heavenly mother, Mary, to lead me to a "lost sheep," as my own earthly mother was called out of life before I had reached my fourth year, especially a "lost sheep" that had such a fervent devotion to her. One of the signs, spiritual writers tell us, that our devotion to Mary is genuine and not sentimental, is that Mary will be instrumental in leading us to have an intense devotion to her Son. It is certainly true that the Blessed Mother lead this orphan boy, the "lost sheep," to her beloved Son who redeemed him, and led him to partake of the Sacraments He instituted, for the salvation of his soul. We believe we realize our intense devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through our devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. I was so deeply impressed with the "lost sheep" orphan boy returning home to his church due to this devotion to the blessed Virgin, and the sweet memory of my mother, in thought associated with his return, that I exhorted my congregation in Durham to always keep up a devotion to Mary to their dying day. As Catholics we know that we are obligated to believe in Divine Revelation but the same obligation does not bind one to private revelation. On one occasion when I

was present seeing a lady with a stigmata bleeding from her forehead and hands as if her head had been crowned with thorns, and having the imprint of the nails and actually suffering the Passion of our Lord in her body and spirit, a message was given to her by the Blessed Virgin, that it was her will that all present pray for Russia. The twenty-one of us, including priest and laymen were thrilled beyond describing in words to hear this message coming from the Blessed Virgin. Speaking to a theologian who was present and deep in thought, I asked him about his impressions and reactions to what we had seen. He answered thoughtfully and cautiously that the stigmata and suffering of the lady could not be explained by natural laws. The large majority of the Russian people are adherents of the Rusisan schematic Church and are not in communion with Rome, yet the peasant people love the Blessed Virgin and have icons of Mary in their homes. The Blessed Virgin is pleased with their devotion to her as it is really the plan of her Son, and is in accordance with His wishes. There is a reason why the Blessed Virgin asks us to pray for Russia so that they can be brought back to the Church Her Son founded. It depends upon us to pray and make reparation for our sins to hasten Russia's conversion. The evil spirit is evidently let loose in the beginning of the suffering predicted to come on mankind before the end of the world. There are supernatural warnings to us, in our forgetfulness of God and being wholly led and governed by secularism. Let us not forget prayer and more prayers that Russia will be converted, and the threat of the third world war will cease and the supernatural might of our prayers will soon hasten the time when Mary's heel will crush the head of Satan. "I will put enmity between thee and the Woman and thy seed and her seed; and she shall crush thy head and thou shall lie in wait for her heel." (Chapter 3, verse 15.) The Immaculate Virgin Mary, the church teaches, is the Woman that God had in mind, the second Eve, and the Mother of Jesus.

MISSION TO CHAPEL HILL

MY FIRST PRIESTLY visit to Chapel Hill was early in the year 1906. A University student from Wilmington was accidentally wounded from a shot fired from a pistol in a college game of amusement. I was called from Nazareth and brought Holy Communion to him, as he was a Catholic. When I went to his bedside, I found that he was not able to receive it. It was late in the evening and too late to return to Nazareth, so I asked for a room for overnight, that I could secure a small oil lamp to burn all night before what our Holy Mother Church teaches is the Real Presence of Our Lord.

Much concern was made by several gentlemen in securing a fitting place as the dormitories were filled to capacity. Realizing this, the official in charge of a dormitory gave me his own room. Having a Mass kit with me, I arose very early in the morning and fitted out an altar table on a dresser in the room, offered up the Mass for the University and all living in Chapel Hill. The student who was wounded was named Waters. I often listened to the sweet soprano voice of his mother singing in the choir of St. Thomas' Church in Wilmington, built by Father Murphy in 1846. I cannot forget the courtesy and kindness of Dr. Abernathy in showing me the points of interest around the University.

About the time William Carmichael, Jr., who is now Vice-President and Finance Officer of the Greater University, was a student there I read a paper on "Why I am a Catholic." The Episcopalian clergyman at the Hill during the first world war had what he called a symposium. He invited a Methodist clergyman to lecture on why he was a Methodist and a Baptist clergyman to lecture and read a paper on "Why he was a Baptist," and other clergymen on why they believed in THEIR churches. I remember that my paper, which had taken me about three months to prepare in my spare time, was well received. I had sent an outline and separate divisions to my bishop and had received not only his hearty approval, but also the approval of Dr. Felix, my dogmatic theological professor and also was commended by Dr. Thomas, who was a classmate when I was an ecclesiastical student at Belmont Abbey College. On another occasion I spoke in the annex of the Presbyterian Church there.

In 1922, I wrote my bishop that I was arranging to have Mass every Sunday for the benefit of the Catholic students. My Bishop wanted me not to take on any more work, and he judged that "now I was satisfied since I was going to open up a mission at Chapel Hill." In addition to receiving a cordial letter from Dr. Graham, the president of the University, I received several other letters from congenial workers for the general welfare of the Carolina students. I quote a letter to me from Mr. Comer, who was the YMCA official there in 1922:

Dear Father O'Brien,

On behalf of the Catholic boys with us at the University this year, I want to thank you for the great convenience to them in coming to the Hill this year, thus saving their tripping to Durham with the expense involved.

I shall get in touch with one of the upperclassmen today and ask him to take responsibility of seeing that the room is in order and furnished with suffiicient seating capacity, before meeting time each Sunday.

Please command us on any point in which we might be able to serve you in your efforts with these boys.

Very sincerely yours,
H. F. COMER, *Gen. Sec.*
University Y.M.C.A.

I first began to have Mass on Sundays in the fall of 1921. On the 18th of October, my seventieth birthday, our Right Reverend Bishop McGuiness said the first Pontifical High Mass at Chapel Hill. The President of the University, Dr. Graham, was present at the Mass. It was during the second world war, and students and officers of the pre-flight school were present in the thousands. Mr. Comer sought me out and in greeting me said, "You are the forerunner of all this happening today."

Another letter among the four others I received was from Mr. Francis F. Bradshaw, Dean of the University students. I quote:

Mr. Wm. F. O'Brien
Immaculate Conception Church
Durham, N. C.

Dear Sir:

I am delighted to know that you intend to serve the Catholic students of the University. It has always seemed to me to be a pity that denominational minorities were unable to furnish opportunity to its members of the students to continue their religious life while at the University. The University is only too glad to assist you in this fine undertaking. I will see that this announcement is made in Chapel on this coming Friday morning when we have the attendance of the entire student body, upperclassmen and all.

I hope you will command me if I can be of assistance to you.

Very sincerely yours,
FRANCIS F. BRADSHAW

Mr. W. D. Carmichael, Sr., the father of W. D. Carmichael, Jr., has an apartment at the Carolina Inn. He often drove over to Chapel Hill with me to attend Mass as he loved the University, his Alma Mater. He was a former superintendent of the Durham Public Schools and Vice-President Emeritus of the Liggett & Myers Tobacco Company. He is now in his eighty-sixth year and living in retirement. After his beloved wife died he was a generous financial supporter of the Immaculate Conception Church in Durham, in which he was baptized in 1940. He purchased the land on which the church in Chapel Hill was to be built, was a very generous contributor to the church and is still a dependable and generous church contributor and has the special honor of breaking ground on which the present magnificent Church of St. Thomas More is erected in Chapel Hill. The few remaining Catholics living in Chapel Hill that either attended Mass from 1921 to 1922 or who attended Mass a few years after, during the time I said Mass there till the time that Monsignor John Manley was appointed to Chapel Hill, when he was superintendent of the Orphanage at Nazareth, are Mr. W. D. Carmichael, Sr., Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Carmichael, Jr., Professor and Mrs. Cameron and daughter, and Mrs. Wettach.

In 1944 I sent my *History of the Catholic Church of Durham, North Carolina,* to Dr. Peter Guilday, historian of the Catholic University of America. Dr. Guilday was the author of the life and time of the first Archbishop of the United States, Archbishop Carroll of Baltimore, the brother of the last survivor of the signer of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Carroll of Carrollton; author also, of the life of Bishop England, who was called "the noblest Roman of them all," that is, of the bishops of America in his day. He was appointed to the See of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1820. North Carolina was included in his jurisdiction. It was through his activity and influence that the Catholic ecclesiastical councils were held for the establishment of laws and degrees for the well-ordered growth in America. Dr. Guilday was the author of the book on the Catholic Councils held in the United States. On receipt of my brochure of the *History of the Catholic Church in Durham*, Dr. Guilday wrote:

> My dear Monsignor O'Brien:
>
> You are indeed kind to send me a copy of your *History of the Catholic Church of Durham, North Carolina,* and I have read the little book with great pleasure. No one but yourself could have told that delightful story in such a striking way. It is a great encouragement to find a parochial

history written in such good taste. I feel I have gained the right to say this, for I have read thousands of parochial histories in the past thirty years.

No doubt you remember my article on "The Writing of Parish Histories," some years ago in the *Ecclesiastical Review*. One of the points I tried to emphasize was that too many of these histories were written as if in a vacuum, and that they seemed to be about exiles. You have escaped that. To you the Catholics are part of Durham. They breathe and live as Durhamites. Unity of that kind is a city's finest asset.

I'll never forget that time I was part of Durham as your guest, during the meeting of the historical societies there.

May our Blessed Lord give to you and your parish every happiness.

Cordially Your Friend in Christ,

PETER GUILDAY.

Archbishop William D. O'Brien, D.D., Auxiliary Archbishop of Chicago and the President of the Catholic Extension Society of America wrote that my little book on the Catholic Church was "well done." I was pastor of the Immaculate Conception Church in Durham for forty-four years. I retired in 1951 as Pastor-Emeritus of the Immaculate Conception Church. I have been living in Durham for fifty-one years. This year, 1958, is my Diamond Jubilee year—sixty years as a priest. If there is one privilege I enjoy, and it is very consoling and comforting to me, thanks to our zealous Bishop Vincent Stanislaus Waters, D.D., it is the private Chapel in my home, where the Real Presence of Our Lord is kept on the altar night and day. If I had any inconvenience in my labors in North Carolina in the past, and any disappointments, it has been infinitely more than compensated in the realization of having the Living Presence of Our Lord, in the Blessed Sacrament on the altar in my home. Following is the letter from Archbishop O'Brien: O'Brien:

My dear Monsignor:

Your gracious note of February 10th, together with the booklet on the *History of the Catholic Church in Durham, North Carolina,* at hand.

This is a very informative booklet you have gotten up giving the history of Durham and it is very well done! The thing I like most about it is how the O'Briens figure in the history of the town, and when I think of how one of our

illustrious namesakes was the vice-president of that tobacco company down there I can't understand why he hadn't built a church and school and rectory for you years ago! I hope you will live to see the fourth school in Durham and the new church that will have to be put up there some day.

Hoping you are real well, and with all good wishes, believe me

Sincerely yours in Christ,
William D. O'Brien

The two lots on which the old church and old school were built and on which the present new church and rectory are built, were given by William T. O'Brien in 1905. Mr. O'Brien died in January, 1906. The writer was not made the first resident pastor of the church in Durham till September, 1907. Had Mr. O'Brien lived, he had intended to build a library for Bishop Haid, his friend, near the Benedictine Abbey where Bishop Haid lived as Abbot of the Monastery there in Belmont. I feel that if he had lived after the writer became pastor in 1907, he would lead in seeing that the temporal needs of the church would not be neglected. Archbishop William O'Brien of Chicago, evidently thought that Mr. William T. O'Brien was living during my pastorate of forty-three years and three months, with the title of Pastor-Emeritus of the Immaculate Conception Church in Durham.

A former pastor of St. Marcella's Chapel in Sanford, North Carolina, now deceased, wrote me in 1944:

My dear Monsignor:

Your History of Catholicity in Durham to hand this morning, I glanced at the opening chapter, it was so interesting, had to sit down and read it through, must say it is a masterpiece and congratulations are due you in writing this history and the great work you have accomplished in Durham and all North Carolina. It brought me back in spirit to bygone days, familiar with many of the names mentioned. I pride myself that I might be associated with in North Carolina in the past pioneer days of the church. Will be an adopted Tar-Heelian forty-one years come March 3rd, next month. God bless you Monsignor, may you live many more years to work in the vineyard of the good Lord.

Most respectfully and sincerely in Xto
George Watkins

Father Watkins was one of the early students at Nazareth when Father Price, Msgr. Irwin, and the writer were banded together as the first missionaries in the North Carolina Apostolate. For this reason, I deeply appreciated the letter he wrote me when he was pastor of St. Marcella's Chapel in Sanford. It is now some fifteen years since he has gone to his reward.

Following is a letter from Father Kuder written in 1944 from Spruce Pine, N. C.:

Dear Monsignor O'Brien:

Please accept my cordial thanks for the "History of St. Mary's Parish." I have read and reread this with interest and wish that other histories of parishes in the Diocese had been recorded with as careful detail. I hope that some day some of our fellow priests having the qualifications and time will write a complete history of the Diocese of Raleigh.

If you do not know this it might be of interest to hear that Maryknoll is about to issue a new and quite complete history of the Life of Father Price. He was well known to you I am sure. A friend wrote to me just this week from New York City and mentioned about this new book from the Maryknoll Press.

I earnestly trust that these years of passing hardships will not exact too great a toll of your health and stamina and you will live to see St. Mary's Parish in Durham grow to become a parish second to none in the state. Again thanking you for sending a copy of its history, I remain,

Sincerely in Our Lord,

WM. J. KUDER

Father Kuder did fine apostolic work when he was assistant to Msgr. Irwin, in New Bern, some years ago.

Another recipient of my brochure was Father Reinfels of Sacramento, California, who writes:

Dear Rt. Rev. Classmate:

More power to you and God bless you for kindly remembering me with the copy—beautifully written—*History of the Catholic Church of Durham, North Carolina.* You are a fine historian and would do well to write the history of the Catholic Church of North Carolina. Too bad you were not made a Bishop. You would have made a good one—as

you are naturally gifted to be a leader and organizer. However "The Master" has you called to be the foundation of His service.

The History came when I was away substituting for a sick neighbor-priest else you would have had a word of hearty thanks before this. You have no idea how deeply I appreciate your kind remembrance.

Well, my good classmate, may God reward you for all your sacrifices made for the Cause of our grand and holy religion. You have the consolation of being a trail-blazer and your fruits are shared by the Junior Clergy.

Your grateful Classmate,

(Rev.) F. P. Reinfels

Father Reinfels was a classmate of mine in the seminary at Belmont from 1894 to 1898. He was a native of Baltimore, Maryland. I was glad to get this letter from an old-timer, who died about three years ago.

HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

The City of Durham was incorporated as a town twelve years before the formation of Durham County. Durham County was formed from parts of Wake and Orange Counties in 1880. The Village of Durham in 1869 contained two hundred people. The first known Catholic to reside in Durham was in 1871, just two years after the incorporation of the little town. The name of the Catholic was Mrs. James Lawrence.

Mrs. James Lawrence, before her marriage, was a Miss Margaret Myers and was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She moved with her family early in life to Charlotte, N. C. Mr. James Lawrence, her husband, who she met in Charlotte, had some reputation, locally, of being a genius in mechanics. Mr. W. T. Blackwell, one of the original tobacco magnates of Durham, hearing of the reputation of Mr. Lawrence of Charlotte, invited him to take a position in his plant. Mr. Lawrence proved to be a valuable acquisition to the tobacco industry, as he subsequently invented the Lawrence Cigarette Packing Machine. This machine was used up to a few years ago.

After Margaret Myers, now Mrs. Lawrence, took up her residence in Durham with her husband in 1871, a Priest from Raleigh came to have Mass in the Lawrence home about every six months. The first Catholic children baptized in Durham were Frank Lawrence and Mary Lawrence. Frank was born September 17, 1876 and Mary Lawrence in 1878. These baptisms took place in Durham, in the Lawrence home in 1880 and were and are now recorded in the Baptismal Register kept in the Sacred Heart Cathedral Rectory in Raleigh. Father James B. White was the officiating Priest.

In 1876 a group of Catholics from Lockhaven, Pennsylvania, located about three miles north of Hillsboro. A Mrs. Shepherd of Raleigh donated a tract of land to these pioneers of that place, and it became known as St. Bernard's Mission. The Priests from Raleigh made visits to the Mission for about four years, or as long as the Catholics remained there. Several Catholics are buried at the spot where the Mission once was. The Mission and the burial lot are now practically forgotten and abandoned. In the fall of 1879, or the spring of 1880, a small number of Catholics of St. Bernard's Mission moved to Durham and attended Mass as often as Mass was said at the home of Mrs. James Lawrence.

One of the families that originally came from Lockhaven, Pennsylvania, to St. Bernard's Mission, three miles north of Hillsboro, and moved to Durham in 1879 or 1880, in turn moved to Stanton,

Virginia, where the writer as a young man of twenty years formed their acquaintance. These devoted people often told him of the periodical visits Priests from Raleigh made to Durham. It was the custom of the few Priests of the Vicariate of North Carolina, some years before Raleigh was made a Diocese, especially in the 80's and 90's, to visit Belmont Abbey from time to time. There at Belmont as a student of the College in 1889, I met Father Mark Gross and Father James B. White, who attended Durham from Raleigh in the 70's and 80's. On one occasion at a gathering of Priests from all over the country with the few Priests of the North Carolina Vicariate, I heard the Venerable Bishop Haid, the Abbot of Belmont Abbey and President of St. Mary's College, thank Father White for his activity and foresight in acquiring the valuable property where the Sacred Heart Cathedral now stands in Raleigh and also for acquiring the property on which the beautiful Church in Asheville is erected.

A remarkable coincidence to me, personally, that keeps the privations and spirit of sacrifice of the early pioneers of St. Bernard's Mission and Durham ever vivid and sacrosanct in my memory is, that I adopted a boy of three years of age in 1911, baptized him and sent him to school at Nazareth, North Carolina and Virginia. Returning home to our little Rectory, he soon kept company with a great-granddaughter of one of the pioneers of St. Bernard's Mission and Durham. I united them in marriage on St. Joseph's Day. Through this dual relationship, to these young Durhamites, as spiritual Father and paternal Father by adoption, as arranged by an inscrutable providence, though I was born in Washington, D. C., I feel rooted in the soil of Durham, where now I have been working and residing for over thirty-six years.

In 1881 a Catholic, who was destined to be a friend indeed to the infant struggling Church in Durham, came from Lynchburg, Virginia and installed the then recently invented Bonsack Machinery in the Duke and Sons Tobacco plant here. Returning to Lynchburg, and making his headquarters there, he also installed this Bonsack Cigarette Machinery in factories in Louisville, Kentucky, and St. Louis, Missouri. In 1883 he returned to Durham, this time to take up his residence. He had a beautiful and tender devotion to St. Joseph and so elected to come to Durham on the 19th of March, the feast of St. Joseph, the foster Father of Jesus Christ. Before the arrival of this devoted, capable and ingenious man, Mr. William T. O'Brien, in 1881 cigarettes were made by hand. Between the years 1881 and 1883 the Bonsack Machinery caused many a headache to the management and their employees. The machinery was simply not workable—it had many defects. Mr. O'Brien worked

over the machinery night and day and watched over it like a devoted mother over a child. As a reward for his genius and painstaking care he perfected this complicated and marvelous masterwork of human ingenuity. He not only saw the Bonsack Machinery working smoothly for the first time with his two eyes, but also the cigarettes turned out thousands by the thousands within the hour. This successful working of the Bonsack Machinery, due to the genius and efforts of Mr. O'Brien gave the real start to the Dukes of Durham in accumulating their millions upon millions. In this sense Mr. William T. O'Brien is the "Grand Daddy" of the American Tobacco Company.

Since the coming of Mr. O'Brien to Durham, his home became the home of priests. Not content with generously supporting them, he purchased property on West Chapel Hill Street and erected a Church. He together with his wife are Benefactors to the Immaculate Conception Church in Durham. He was the most generous Catholic layman in North Carolina in his day. He gave Father Price, the first native born secular priest in North Carolina, $5,000.00 shortly after that saintly and zealous missionary founded the Catholic Orphanage at Nazareth. He was preparing to build a Library for Bishop Haid at Belmont before he died. He put off building a house for himself and his family, because, he said, he wanted to see a House of God in Durham before he would think of one for himself and his own. He died two weeks after the dedication of the Church in 1906. Stationed at the Catholic Orphanage at Nazareth, N. C., at the time, I brought a goodly number of the orphan children to attend the Solemn Requiem Mass at which, Bishop Haid, his friend, was the celebrant. Indeed the memory of the many charities of Mr. William Thomas O'Brien to the poor of the city, and his generosity of spirit, is a treasured Christian heritage to the Catholic Church of Durham.

If Mr. O'Brien made his home the Home of the Priests, his devoted and sacrificing wife was the gentle Queen of the Household. The Priests felt the warmth of the Christian hospitality she invariably dispensed. Indeed thoughts would naturally suggest themselves to one to evaluate how far this gentle Christian character influenced her husband in his many benefactions to the Church and the poor.

Mrs. Catherine O'Brien, the mother of Mr. William T. O'Brien, was born in Limerick, Ireland. She lived to be ninety years of age. She was of noble mien and mellowed to the fullest in patience and kindliness. She would remind one of the Prophetess Anna who loved to come to the Temple and remain absorbed in recollection and prayer. Miss Margaret O'Brien, her daughter, seemed to have dedicated her life in care of her venerable mother. It was the intention of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. O'Brien to have the church named after

St. Joseph, but as there was a church named after St. Joseph in the colored section of the city, there was some anxiety about the possible mix up of the mail, for this reason it was decided to name the church in honor of the Blessed Virgin. Knowing this, Miss Margaret O'Brien remarked to Bishop Haid shortly before the dedication of the church in 1906: "Bishop, since the church is going to be named after the Blessed Virgin, could we suggest that the church be given the beautiful title of the Immaculate Conception of Mary." The good Bishop was only too glad to dedicate the church under the title of the Immaculate Conception. It was only fitting and proper that the sister of the Benefactor of the church would have the honor and privilege of suggesting the beautiful title of the sinless Mother of Jesus Christ as Patroness of the church.

The oldest son of Mr. William T. O'Brien, William J. O'Brien, is a veteran of the World War I and is at present the Civilian Coordinator of the City of Durham. He was married to Miss Ruth Green in April, 1910. Not only was William J. O'Brien filled with joy, but the heart of Mrs. W. T. O'Brien, the mother of William J. O'Brien, was enlarged when her daughter-in-law was received into the "bark of Peter" by their Pastor in January, 1914. Ruth Green's grandfather owned a goodly portion of the good earth of Durham before it was a village. On one occasion, when called from Durham to Tokay near Fayetteville, N. C., to administer the Sacraments to the daughter of Colonel Wharton Green, a Civil War veteran and son of General Green of Mexican Revolutionary fame, the Colonel asked me how the progressive city of Durham was moving along. After I had given him a rosy picture of Durham's future, he stated that at one time in his life he nearly owned all of Durham. "How do you figure that out, Colonel?" I asked. "Well," said the Colonel, "I was interested in buying a ranch. My agent was negotiating with a namesake of mine, a Mr. Green of Durham, but had finally decided to purchase a ranch in Texas. Had I chosen Durham when it was a crossroad I would have owned all Durham." The membership of the church in Durham has not only increased through the children of the sturdy pioneers but it is also identified with families who are descendants of the first settlers of the community. Mrs. William J. O'Brien is only one of the converts of the people of prominence in Durham.

A young priest ordained by Bishop Haid about the year 1894 and whom I frequently met during my days in the Seminery at Belmont, North Carolina, was a Father Pendergast. He was born in Philipsburg, N. J. Appointed Pastor of Raleigh he gave one Sunday in the month to Durham. The little flock in Durham was devoted to him, especially the O'Brien family. I recall very vividly

how he importuned me in the fall of 1898 to take a Sunday for him in Raleigh so he could visit Durham. Being Assistant Pastor at New Bern, North Carolina, at the time, I had made a visit to Belmont to celebrate Thanksgiving Day, and on my return I stopped over in Raleigh to supply for him. I still remember how deeply he appreciated my giving him an opportunity to visit his warm friends in Durham. It was like making a visit to his home folks. The good Father did not live long. In February, 1899 he had gone to receive his reward in his long Home. Father Griffin, the Pastor of St. Patrick's in Fayetteville, was appointed to succeed Father Pendergast in Raleigh and I was transferred from New Bern to Fayetteville to succeed Father Griffin in February, 1899. In the fall of 1899 I made an exchange with Father Griffin for Sunday services. Father Griffin took my place in Fayetteville, and I took his Sunday in Durham as it was the one Sunday in the month he gave to Durham. I shall never forget my first visit to Durham as a Priest. Miss Margaret O'Brien, the sister of Mr. O'Brien, met me at the Depot. The Depot then was an old shed. Mr. Patrick O'Brien, the Postmaster of Durham at the time, and brother of William T. O'Brien took a great deal of pleasure in pointing out to me all places of interest of the growing town. This was in the days before there was a Catholic Church in Durham. I said Mass in a room over the old Seeman Printery on Corcoran Street and on a second visit in a room over a bakery on Main Street. On week days I said Mass in the old O'Brien Home on Wilkerson Avenue.

In 1901 Father Michael Irwin was sent to Durham as Missionary Pastor with headquarters at Newton Grove, North Carolina. As Durham was growing he gave two Sundays to Durham when there were five Sundays in the month. On the other Sundays of the month he interested young men who were studying for the Priesthood at Nazareth to have regular catechetical instructions in Durham every Sunday. Father Michael Irwin was born in Portsmouth, Virginia. He was a tireless worker. In addition to administering to the one hundred souls, including men, women and children, he preached on his every visit to non-Catholics in the halls of East and West Durham. He made monthly visits to Durham for seven long years. The older members of the congregation remember him as a very capable, zealous and truly missionary Priest. Father Irwin, now Rt. Rev. Monsignor Michael A. Irwin is still going strong in his 77th year, as Pastor of St. Paul's Church, New Bern, the Mother of all the Churches in North Carolina by reason of its primacy as to age.

On the 23rd of September, 1907, Bishop Haid appointed the writer, Father William Francis O'Brien, the first resident Pastor of

Durham. In September, 1907, there were about 110 Catholics in Durham, including men, women and children. I loved the environment of Nazareth at the time. The community life lived there was attractive. I came to Nazareth as an invalid and was Chaplain from Christmas 1900 until September 1907, except for a few months in 1903, when I again worked the Fayetteville Mission, and about three months in 1905 when I worked the Goldsboro Mission.

Were I to be called away from Nazareth, I had hoped that I would be sent to Durham, not because Durham had more religion than any other place, but because, as it seemed to me, everybody was working in Durham. It was a hustling and bustling place. Another reason why I had a soft spot for Durham was that a devastating fire broke out in the old Priest's House at Nazareth in October 1905. I was compelled to jump out of the third story window. Naturally, I was laid up for repairs. The children of Durham sent me a sizable check. It was signed by Felicia Kueffner as Treasurer of the Durham Sunday School Class. Miss Felicia Kueffner, now Mrs. I. L. Sears has been our Organist for 37 years. In all that time she has not only played the organ and directed the Choir without a thought of compensation, but gladly and generously paid for the sheets and books of music used by the members of the choir. The Mother of Mrs. Sears, Mrs. Rudolph Kueffner, has always been a very active Church worker. She has lived in Durham 47 years and is now at the ripe age of 87 years. She still comes to the Church and receives Holy Communion every month and some times oftener. Her son, Mr. Herbert Kueffner, has been the City Engineer for 18 years and has been the Director of Public Works of Durham for the last 12 years. He is a devoted member of the Church.

It is a coincidence that I am recording these pleasant recollections on the 53rd Anniversary of my seeing the town of Durham for the first time. In the morning of the 18th of June, 1890, I passed through Durham on my way from Belmont, North Carolina to New Bern. I was then a boy of 17 years, never dreaming that I would be appointed the first Resident Priest of the little town that was so fascinating to me, so filled with attractions in the tobacco world, and where I was destined to spend up to now over half of my life.

Having nearly ten years of experience on the Carolina Missions and as Chaplain at Nazareth before coming to Durham as first Resident Priest, my first thought, even though there was not adequate housing for the Priest, was to work to get a school. The idea of working for a school here and now did not meet with the hearty approbation of my little flock. As they looked upon it—it cer-

tainly was not the practical thing to do. Why, the children were not here. The Priest does not have a home. It would be folly to bring the Sisters here. There is no place for them to stay. They would have to return to their Motherhouse in humiliation. Besides, where was the money, not to speak of the opposition that would come from good and sincere people, not of our persuasion, who would naturally think it was their bounden duty to oppose such a move. I had been preaching and working purely with non-Catholic people, together with Father Irwin throughout Wake County. We were Priests sent to preach the Gospel not only to Catholics, but to all the people. When I was appointed Pastor of Durham I literally looked upon all Durham as my Parish. If I could not personally contact all the people in my Durham Parish, which would be the most effective way in contacting them in the years ahead looking at it in the light of eternity? And how could I content myself leading, as I view it, a humdrum life. Could I save my soul living my life in such circumscribed limits. "My soul longed for the Courts of the Lord." Even if I failed, I would have the assurance that I failed in a good cause. It seemed to me that if I treasured the pathway to happiness and looked forward to receive consolation in my labor, I had no other choice, but to work for a school, wherein I could not only gather our few children, but also the children of our good neighbors.

We started our little school in September 1909. The first day we had nine children and closed with twenty-three children at the end of the year. Now we have one hundred and seventy children. Sixty per cent are children of parents not of our persuasion. Our first school was in the little rectory in the rear of the church, in which the Priests are now living. The second school was in the building the Sisters now occupy. It was built in 1913 mostly from collections taken up in Baltimore, Washington, Buffalo, N. Y., and in New York City. The third school building is at 406 West Chapel Hill Street and is nearer to the heart of the City. Bishop William O'Brien, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, gave $25,000 towards this building, which is known as St. William's School. His Excellency, our Most Rev. Bishop Eugene J. McGuiness, gave $10,000 to purchase property for the building of a commodious school on Burch Avenue after this World War II. If I am here after the duration of this war I may see our fourth school building in the span of my years as Pastor of Durham.

Children Receiving Their First Holy Communion
in The Old Church—1945

May Day Celebration in First Church

Some idea of our reason for the struggle to perpetuate our school can be had from an article I contributed to the November issue of the Extension Magazine in 1914 when we had thirty children:

"The town wherein I labor has about thirty thousand people, but of this number only 110 souls are Catholic. (1914.) This includes men, women and children. It may seem strange that I have a school—or that I was so insistent for a school, but when everything is considered it is not to be marveled at. The sum of $500.00, sent me through the Catholic Extension Society, made possible its erection. A school is a crying need of every Catholic Mission. I consider aid given for schools in the Southland, when the population is chiefly non-Catholic, practical missionary work directed in the right channel. The making of converts in a stronghold of Protestantism is necessarily slow. And if a school is not established in such a community the children of converts may not be brought up in the Faith. The school is necessary both for the preservation and conservation of the Faith of our children. In a community where a school is established, the foundation for the Church of the future has been well laid. Provision has been made for a systematic upbuilding of the Church through the children and their children's children. A devoted Sister in a classroom will necessarily mold the hearts and minds of the children to the practice of virtue. Through these children the Priest will convert his parish and his parish in turn will be the leaven in his efforts to convert the 'other sheep' of the community. This is indeed true, particularly in North Carolina, where the vast majority of people are overwhelmingly Protestant.

"We are fortunate in securing the Dominican Sisters from an eastern province, for our school here. At the opening we had nine children. There are now thirty happy and contented youngsters within its walls.

"The Cross is now raised above our little school, and, too, Old Glory is floating over it. For the increase of the love of God and Country more schools should be built, and religious should be given the opportunity to give more pleasure to their Divine Spouse and Lover, Jesus Christ.

"A school like this in a Protestant stronghold is one of the glories of the Church. It is a veritable stronghold—a fortress from behind the walls of which we can repel evil forces of unbelief and indifferentism.

"The religious communities, who generously give some of their members for these poor and out-of-the-way Missions, have learned the secret of increase. The words of Holy Writ: 'Cast thy bread upon the running waters; for after a long time thou shalt find it again,' have a literal significance to them. They have learned that the secret of receiving is simply to give joyously. These sacrifices bear fruit in rich graces for the religious order that, forgetting itself, has truly remembered 'these, My little ones.' The pioneer work of the individual members is felt by the whole congregation. Then the influence that the Sisters have is indeed wonderful. Their lives, as the work goes on, are filled with consolation, and gradually become the 'hundredfold reward' promised even in this world. The missionary Sister who puts her hand to the plow, never to turn back, prefers to work on the missions. Like Mary, she too, has chosen the better part, and does not wish it to be 'taken from her.' Religious communities through the members generously given in the South and other needy parts of the country, in turn influence the entire Church.

"The Sisters too as religious, are object-lessons to the religious minded non-Catholics, in these parts especially. Realizing that the system of Protestantism is powerless to produce religious the non-Catholics lose faith in their own respective denominations and study the claims of the Old Mother Church. Bigotry and opposition may assert themselves in various forms among a limited number who are ignored by the majority of their coreligionists, but this will be only of short duration in comparison to the future years of rich harvesting. We are only units in the work. The struggle in our efforts in planning to so adjust conditions that the pendulum will in God's time swing our way, may take up the greater portion of our span of life, but the effort is a most glorious one and in itself contains its own reward even here. It is laying the foundation of a future glorious Church. What matter if we do not see the immediate fruit? It is God's work. It is not ours. Our consolation is that we have started right, no matter what the financial condition, how few the pupils, or what the opposition. The fewness of the pupils has not troubled me. If St. Augustine considered one soul sufficient for the diocese of a Bishop, surely I cannot deny that one soul is enough of a class to warrant religious instruction. Thirty pupils to my mind,

constitute a thriving school, especially when I consider that the good Sisters opened the school with only nine children in attendance.

"Of course it is from my actual and practical experience that I realize the necessity of Sisters for our pioneer work. If a religious is taken from the ranks where the Church is prospering, another can be found to supply her place. This is not so with religious doing pioneer work. If the work is not done voluntarily in these parts by zealous souls it will never be done. Hence the individual religious souls can have the consolation of knowing that if the work is not done here by themselves, God will never get the external glory which is now causing much divine complacency in His Heart, and of which they are the chosen instruments. The work without a school is necessarily spasmodic. With a school the work goes on ad infinitum. Money given for schools is put in God's Bank, the interest of which will increase the noble missionary work here beyond our fondest dreams.

"Under God, I attribute the success of the work to the Sisters, those noble women who have seconded every effort I have made in behalf of Christian education. Their generosity has borne the fruit that a sacrifice always brings forth, and the results of their work in my school gives the promise of permanency to our joint labors."

A History of the Parish of Durham would not be complete without recording the self-sacrificing work of the Dominican Sisters who have been teaching in St. Mary's, now St. William's School, for over thirty-four years, or from the struggling and trying days of its infancy.

My first contact with Dominican Sisters was in the year 1899. A cousin of mine of New York City applied to be a cloistered Sister in the Dominican Monastery of Perpetual Adoration in Newark, N. J. I was present at her reception. Making a second visit in 1901 on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the Rev. Mother Superior asked me to speak to the Sisters. "What shall I talk about?" "On anything you might say that will increase the love of souls in their hearts," replied the good Mother. I described the missionary work at Nazareth. The Priests lived at Nazareth, Wake County. They built Chapels throughout the County, invited the people to come to the Chapels. We went out without money or food. Slept on the boards in the Chapels, if necessary. We had a setting similar to that of St. Dominic when he went among the obstinate Waldensian and Albigensian people. This was the work that their founder loved.

Pray for North Carolina with the same intensity of love and fervor that you are praying for New York and New Jersey. Archbishop Corrigan had introduced the Order into Newark, New Jersey and Hunt's Point, New York. Several Archbishops remarked that this was the time when we should introduce more active workers into the vineyards of the Church. Archbishop Corrigan replied that he considered this move of introducing these Cloistered Nuns of Perpetual Adoration into his Diocese as one of dynamic action. Our Divine Lord remained in solitude with Joseph and Mary until He was thirty years old. Why did not Jesus Christ go out to the helpless and sinning world when the world was yearning and sorely in need of Him? "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counsellor?" One of my consolations in my early Priesthood while working in the Carolina Missions was the thought of and knowledge that virginal and angelic souls were making sacrifices and praying for the North Carolina Missions.

When I saw the Dominican Sisters come from New York to North Carolina in 1907 and locate particularly at that time, in the out-of-the-way place of Newton Grove, the immortal lines of Tennyson instantly came to my mind: "There is more wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Father Irwin first received the Dominican Sisters in North Carolina. I had given a Mission for Father Irwin in Newton Grove in 1906, the year before the coming of the Sisters there. Returning in the fall of 1907 I observed a remarkable change among the people and especially among the children due to the gentle and cultural influence of the Sisters. I then and there determined to get the Dominican Sisters for Durham. There were two communities of Sisters in the State at that time. The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Christian Education, who had recently opened the College of St. Genevieve in Asheville. The sisters of Mercy community was founded by Bishop England in Charleston, South Carolina, and is older than the Mother McCauley Sisters of Mercy. The Sisters of Mercy are rich in traditions of apostolic work in the Carolinas. In 1909 the Sisters were too few in number to take all the places clamoring for Sisters to do pioneer work, even though they were willing to do so. Of necessity a call had to be made for other Communities to lend a helping hand. Would the Sisters of St. Dominic accept Durham when there were only 110 souls including infants in 1909? Would they accept Durham where there were so few children and where there were no Sisters or a Catholic School before? Would they accept Durham where the coin for barter necessary to purchase food for subsistence was all but invisible?

The most apostolic woman I ever met, Rev. Mother Emmanuel, the Mother General of the Dominican Sisters of Newburgh, New York, readily consented to send her Sisters to our Mission.

The Church of the Immaculate Conception is very much alike in appearance to the Dominican Monastery Chapel in Newark, N. J. It would be impossible to describe the flood of thoughts that flashed through my mind when I heard the Sisters chant the canonical hours of prayer and praise in our little Immaculate Conception Church, as I had heard and seen Dominican Sisters chant the divine praises in their Monastery Chapel in Newark. In every undertaking worthy of the name, there are moments of joy and sorrow, of hopes and disappointments, successes and failures. When our infant struggling school was hanging on a thread, more than one time, I would write post haste to the Sisters in Newark to storm the heaven of Heavens for us that we continue to carry on. There were dire predictions from all sides of certain failure in our efforts, but I could not be greatly disturbed. I had too much confidence in our earthly as well as our heavenly intercessors. "There is more wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." The existence of St. William's School is absolute proof of it, if proof were needed.

About the time I was appointed Pastor to Durham, there were three outstanding citizens who wielded a wide moral and intellectual influence in the community of Durham by reason of their high Christian principles and probity. They were like beacon lights in the community. The names of this triumvirate were: Mr. Southgate, Mr. Mimms and Mr. W. D. Carmichael. Mr. Southgate was interested in organizing the Chamber of Commerce. Having a desire to contact the people, I volunteered to solicit members in the interest of the good of the city in this laudable civic project. As a citizen I personally subscribed for three shares in the Hotel Washington Duke. Mr. Southgate gave me a cordial heart and hand in my efforts. In after years when representative citizens of the community were interested in building a Dormitory on the East Campus in memory of Mr. Southgate, I personally contributed my mite to commemorate the memory of Mr. Southgate as a Christian gentleman who had the interest of his people at heart. The gentleman who gladly received my mite replied with deep feeling: "Father O'Brien, this is worth thousands of dollars to you personally." It was their way of expressing their appreciation.

Mr. Mimms, the second of the triumvirate, is now or was some years ago at the head of the English Department in Vanderbilt University.

Mr. W. D. Carmichael was Superintendent of Public Instruction in the Schools of the City and did his share in building up, coordinating and perfecting the Public School System in Durham. The term of nine months and twelve grades were taught in the Public School System in Durham when I came to Durham in 1907. Only recently the Legislature passed a law that nine months term of school and 12 grades should be taught wherever possible. Twelve grades were only taught in Raleigh after Bishop McGuinness established 12 grades in Raleigh Cathedral School about three years ago.

About three years ago I had the happiness of receiving Mr. W. D. Carmichael into the Church. He is now retired from the Liggett and Myers Tobacco Company of which he was the Executive Vice-President and is living in Chapel Hill where he serves the Priests' daily Mass and daily receives Holy Communion.

Mrs. W. D. Carmichael was a loyal and devout member of the Congregation. She loved God's House and frequently made visits to the Blessed Sacrament. Devotion to the Church and its interests was a passion with her. She arranged to have a Mass said daily for the Poor Souls in perpetuum. For years before her husband was received into the Church she had a votive light burning daily before the Sacred Heart Shrine that her husband one day would come into the Bark of Peter. She was queenly in her manner, gentle in disposition and was admired generally in social circles. Fifteen years have passed since her death, yet the influence of the godly union of Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Carmichael is a sweet and treasured memory that time will not efface in the lives of many Christian souls who are still with us.

The Carmichaels were blessed with nine children. Five of them were called to Heaven in their infancy. These holy innocents did not linger long here on earth after the regenerating waters were poured on their foreheads. I have often invoked these holy innocents as angelic and saintly intercessors, as did their devoted parents. The oldest son, William Donald Carmichael, Jr., is the Vice-President and Finance Officer of the Consolidated University at Chapel Hill. He has received Holy Communion daily for the last twenty-five years. As an Altar Boy in his youthful years he often served my Mass. He had the happiness of seeing his devoted wife received into the Church. Cartwright Carmichael, the second son, has a responsible and leading position in the Liggett and Myers Tobacco Company. He loved to be in the Sanctuary when a little boy and is now a devoted member of the Church. Martin is doing well in Philadelphia. His charming wife is a convert to the Church and they are blessed with several children. I baptized

Robert, the fourth son. He was a pupil of our school. He is doing well in New York City. His wife is a devoted member of the Church.

In my early pastorate of Durham, nothing gave me more consolation, especially when I had to leave Durham to attend my out missions for days and weeks, than to know that there was one devoted soul who had the opportunity more than others, to be perpetually in and around the Church, making frequent visits to the Sanctuary and keeping fresh flowers on the Altar as an act of personal love to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. The immediate care of the Church and the keeping of the house of the Priest was the personal choice of Miss Ann Rhea Harvey. Miss Ann Harvey was the sister of Mrs. Etta Smedes, the wife of the President of St. Mary's Episcopal School in Raleigh and the cousin of Miss Emma McVeigh, the President of Sweet Briar College in Virginia. In 1898 when she resided in Raleigh at St. Mary's Episcopal School, she was a very close friend of Miss Nettie Marshall, the sister of Doctor Marshall, the Episcopal Minister in Raleigh at that time. Miss Nettie Marshall was a distinguished and devout convert of Father Julius, a very able and very spiritual priest of the Order of St. Benedict. It was under the inspiration, example and direction of this Man of God that the Monsignori Michael A. Irwin and William F. O'Brien owe, under God, the fostering and cultivation of their vocations to the Priesthood. Miss Ann Rhea Harvey and Miss Nettie Marshall would remind the struggling missionary priests of the holy women who administered to the Apostles. Miss Harvey kept house for Monsignor Thomas Griffin of Raleigh for about twelve years. In 1910 on the eve of Passion Sunday Miss Ann elected to come to Durham and keep house for Monsignor O'Brien. After nearly twenty-three years of devotion to her duties as housekeeper to the priest and personal love of the Church, she died full of years and good works January 1, 1933, the octave of the Nativity and the Feast of the Circumcision of Our Lord.

In life she had a burning desire to be buried at Nazareth. On a beautiful Sunday morning in October, 1898, she was one of the few who saw Father Price, the Tar Heel Apostle, bless his ideal place on which he was to build his orphanage. She was so impressed in seeing Father Price in his purposeful and devout demeanor, with crucifix in hand, his immaculate white surplice and the folds of his cassock blowing in the breeze, that she had a longing desire, then and there, to have her last resting place at Nazareth. She was God-Mother to many baptized children in Durham, who are now grown up to manhood and womanhood, who revere her memory. She

shared very largely in spirit with the Priest in the struggles incident to a mission church. We feel that she is not the least of our intercessors of the Church of Mary Immaculate in Durham.

A family that gave much consolation to the writer in his early labors in Durham was the Gallagher family. The Gallaghers were devoted, loyal and militant. Mr. Philip Gallagher was devoted to such saintly and early pioneer Priests as Father Mark Gross, in his early days in the Carolinas. Father Gross came from Baltimore with Bishop Gibbons, in 1868. Bishop Gibbons afterwards became Cardinal Gibbons. In my rounds in the Fayetteville Missions in 1899 and 1900, the people in the remote places from the larger centers were still singing and constantly repeating the Litany of good works and charities of good Father Gross. On coming to Durham in 1907, Mr. Philip Gallagher came to me and spoke of the difficulty of getting and building a school in Durham, where the children were not, "but I will be with you in whatever you do in the interest of the Church," he said. He was blessed with a large family. The Gallagher children made up half of my little school in the beginning. Mrs. Gallagher taught Sunday School in Laurinburg and seconded the Priests in all their efforts. Her home was the home of the Priests wherever she lived on the Carolina Missions. Mrs. Gallagher was a descendant from a line of militant Catholics in Carolina. Her mother, Mrs. Robinson of New Bern, at one time warned one of her sons about attending a Sectarian Church with a young lady—that if he presisted in doing so, she would come into the Church before the whole congregation and take him out. The son did not heed the warning of his mother. The mother true to her word and convictions went into the Church and took her son out. The son in chagrin and embarrassment said that she would never see him again and that this would be a separation forever. The son remained away from home for about three months, and then returned and looked upon and felt in deep appreciation that his mother was indeed a "Mother of Israel." One day Mrs. Robinson, the mother of Mrs. Gallagher saw Bishop Haid riding in a train going to fill one of his appointments in the State. Coming up to the Bishop she said, "Bishop, you don't know me, I am a Mrs. Robinson, one of your little flock." "What I don't know you!" said the Bishop, "Why, I know you among a thousand mothers. Would to God we had many more mothers like you in North Carolina." One of Mrs. Gallagher's sons, Patrick Gallagher, went through our school with his brothers and sisters, graduated at Chapel Hill, finished his theological studies in Rome and was ordained a Priest. He is now doing well in Virginia.

In my labors in Durham invaluable moral and financial help throughout the years was given to me by the ladies of the Altar

Society. The ladies carried on in their lay activities in doing good before I was appointed Pastor. Much credit should be given to Miss Margaret O'Brien, the sister of Mr. W. T. O'Brien. She with Miss Susan Burns, who afterwards became Sister Mary Mercedes, conducted St. Ann's Society, the Sunday School, a Catholic library for the children, and visited the sick. Our Altar Society is the continuation of St. Ann's Society. The only lady now in the congregation who was a member of St. Ann's Society and is still a faithful and active member of the Altar Society is Mrs. Luther Markham. Mrs. M. T. Adkins, who came to Durham a few years after my appointment here, has been a very loyal, tireless and active member throughout the years. Mrs. S. M. Credle has been a very devout, capable and dependable member since her coming to Durham over twenty years ago. Mrs. James B. Smith has been a dependable, faithful and loyal member since her coming to Durham, which was over twenty years ago. Mrs. B. D. Dodson has been a generous and active member for about twenty-one years. Mrs. C. A. Johnson has been an invaluable member for over seventeen years and is now as active as she was seventeen years ago.

A very active member of the Altar Society, who has gone to receive her reward, was Mrs. Thomas Brenan. In addition to her interest in the Altar Society and Church Circles generally she was deeply in sympathy with the success of our infant struggling school. She had put away the savings of her little crippled nephew who died in his twelfth year. This little sum she gave to me as my first contribution for my school. She remarked that it made her happy to give this little purse for our school as she felt her little nephew would be so pleased to give it for this purpose, if he were living. This most gracious act touched me deeply at the time. I cannot forget it. May her soul rest in Peace!

There is only one person not mentioned so far in this paper who has been a member of the congregation for over forty years and that is Mr. Frank Kellerman. Mr. Kellerman has been a very faithful and loyal member of the Church. He is now seventy-six years of age and looks like he will be active many more years hence.

The little congregation was blessed with religious people who spent their early days in Durham. Miss Susan Burns left Durham in 1897 to become a Sister of Mercy at Belmont. She was a lady of refinement and culture. She became Sister Mary Mercedes. Miss Blanche Hasse, a convert to the faith, and a cousin of Mr. Southgate Jones, and one of the oldest and most respected families in Durham, became a Religious of Christian Education and is now at the College of St. Genevieve of the Pines in Asheville. Mary Frances Shea, who spent a great part of her childhood days in

Durham and has a childlike love for our little Church, graduated at Boston College, competed with fifty native French students from Montreal in French and won the Class Gold Medal for excellence in French, became a Sister of Notre Dame in Montreal. She is known as Sister Mary of the Divine Heart. She is the niece of Mrs. W. J. O'Brien.

A fourth Sister, Miss Catherine Robbins, now Sister Mary Grace, a Sister of Mercy, was a native of Durham. She was born in our little Rectory. Her parents lived in the little house that the Church converted into a little Rectory after my arrival as the first resident Priest. Catherine was only four months old when I came to Durham. As her father was away, it fell to my lot to keep an eye on and mind baby Catherine while her mother was in the Church fixing the Altar. I saw her grow up. She attended and graduated from our School. She is now an asset to the Sisters of Mercy in Asheville.

In my work here I have not forgotten the care and concern of a Pastor for the material and spiritual care of the Colored people. I preached more than once in the Colored Baptist and Methodist Churches in Durham. In 1913 when there was a seeming discrimination against the Colored people, I wrote to the Editor of the *Durham Herald* suggesting better moral conditions for these people. A few introductory lines of the letter follows:

> "I was very much impressed with an article in your paper yesterday. The headline read: 'Is the Negro Expecting Too Much?' This excellent article was signed by a Negro of Greensboro. It was certainly to your eternal credit that you in your characteristic fairness published it, and it must have been refreshing reading indeed to all Christian men and women who read it. I, for one, am deeply grateful to you and heartily thank you."

The Negro writer of the article, Dr. James B. Dudley, President of the State Teachers Association, who made such a reasonable and excellent appeal for the just consideration of the rights of his people, wrote me in appreciation of my letter published in the *Durham Herald* of June 13, 1913, and said:

> "I got much encouragement from your letter, as did also many other Negroes who are interested in this question and who called my attention to the splendid sentiments expressed. We are sure your expressions represent the feeling of the best people of the South and that it is only necessary for us to let the people know how badly we are treated and how seriously we are being imposed upon at times."

In my early Pastorate here I was deeply moved by a class of High School Colored pupils singing Negro Spirituals. I felt as if it were called from Heaven to help them and their people to travel here as pilgrims in a direction pleasing to God. The thought of Priests as teachers and pastors coming from elsewhere at that time seemed out of the question. I was naturally devoted to my work, yet I felt urged to write to Bishop Haid that I was willing to let a Priest take over my work, and I would take up the Colored work here, starting from scratch. The Bishop wrote me to stick to my work, which he described to me was not a little work and to do what I could on the side for the Colored people, and if the work prospered he would send a Priest to care for them. I did what I could for some years, but found it humanly impossible to do two works. At last the day dawned, when our good, tireless and devoted Bishop Eugene J. McGuiness negotiated and planned for the Jesuit Fathers of Baltimore to take up the Colored work here. Father John Risacher, S. J., was sent here about three years ago to take up the work for the Colored people, and how well did he plan his work and how devoted he is to it! I am eternally grateful to him for asking me to perform the ceremony of blessing the ground which was to be the scene of his sacrificial future labors of love in his apostolic field.

When I was appointed to Durham in 1907 I gave it three Sundays a month. The fourth Sunday I had services at Halifax, N. C. During the week I visited Littleton, Weldon, Roanoke Rapids, Penitentiary Farms, Enfield, Scotland Neck and Crowell. I preached in a public hall in Weldon and in the Town Hall at Enfield. I placed placards in the banks, business houses and public places. I had good audiences, I well remember, in Town Hall at Enfield. As my flock increased in Durham, these Missions which I attended for 20 years were taken over by younger Priests recently ordained. This enabled me to attend Missions in the Durham area. I paid monthly visits to Hillsboro, Efland, Oxford, Roxboro and Henderson.

I said Mass for a few years at Chapel Hill on Sundays. My first visit to Chapel Hill was in the days when William D. Carmichael, Jr., now Vice-President and Finance Officer of the University, was a student there. The Priest in Henderson would come over to Durham on Saturday and say the first Mass at Durham. After saying the Sunday Mass at Chapel Hill I would return to Durham and have my second Sunday Mass here. The students and parents appreciated this very much. A letter written January 22, 1922 by Mrs. R. H. Staton, Hendersonville, N. C., is an example of the deep appreciation of the Priests saying Mass at Chapel Hill at that time:

"For several weeks I have been wanting to write, to thank you for what you are doing for the Catholic boys at Chapel Hill.

"I have two boys there, one in his third year, the other in his second. While they usually went to Durham, every other Sunday, to hear Mass, this is so much better for them, as well as the others. Vincent and Leon have always been good boys, never, up to the present moment, given me one anxious moment, for which I am very thankful.

"One can never tell, what may happen, there are so many temptations where boys are thrown with so many different types of characters. I feel that your going over to Chapel Hill gives them, in a way, greater opportunities than when they went to Durham. They realize the sacrifices you are making for them, and the others, that they may have the privileges of their religion. I think it is just wonderful. I sincerely hope that your congregation will grow. Am quite positive that, if it doesn't it will be through no fault of yours.

"Very many thanks to you, Father O'Brien, and may the year 1923 contain untold blessings for you is the prayer of a most grateful Mother.

Very sincerely,
MRS. R. H. STATON."

This good lady is still living and has a son, Dr. Staton, in the service of Uncle Sam, stationed at Camp Butner. The Doctor hastened to come to see his old Pastor. Our prayers are with him.

On October 18, 1942, on my 70th birthday, our Rt. Rev. Bishop McGuiness celebrated a Pontificial Mass at Chapel Hill. The President of the University was present at the Mass. Students and officers of the Pre-Flight School were present in the thousands. The Mass was a revelation to me. When I first started to say Mass in 1921 at Chapel Hill, I said Mass in the University Y.M.C.A. Building. The present official, Mr. Comer, who was an official in 1921 and cooperated with me as far as he possibly could do so, in greeting me on the occasion of the Pontificial celebration, said to me that I was the forerunner of all this happening today. I deeply appreciated his personal expression and was somewhat puzzled to divine his line of thought.

The Priests who were my assistants or quasi-assistants during my Pastorate here were Fathers Lagle, Dr. Morrissey, Noonan, Livelsburger and Curran. Father William J. Dillon was sent here after he was ordained to take my place when I was on a collecting tour

in Baltimore, Washington and New York in 1910. Father Patrick Gallagher took my place when I attended the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in 1932.

Father Charles B. McLaughlin is my present Assistant and is very active. He is assisted by a Priest from Nazareth and also has a Mass at Duke University on Sundays. We have six Sunday Masses. The attendance of the Congregation and the officers with their wives and the servicemen from Camp Butner is inspiring. The future looks bright and rosy. Catholic thought is seeping in the minds of our good neighbors. The debts on the Church, the Convent, the new School and the Church property fronting on Burch Avenue have all been cleared. It seems to us that the finger of God is here.

(Signed) WILLIAM F. O'BRIEN.

During my pastorate at Durham from 1907 to 1951, a period of forty-three years and four months, I received a few letters highly commending and very pleasing, from persons I personally never met, as well as laudatory articles in the *Durham Herald* and *Durham Sun*, and a splendid letter from Mr. Carr, the mayor of our City of Durham.

COPY

Office of the Mayor
W. F. Carr

Rev. W. F. O'Brien
810 West Chapel Hill Street
Durham, North Carolina

September 14, 1948

Dear Monsignor:

It is with interest and inspiration that we note that on October 7 you will have completed fifty years of priesthood. We also note that you are rounding out the forty-first year of your work in Durham.

During all these years you have been a much loved and highly respected citizen of our City. You have added to the spiritual, moral and physical upbuilding of Durham and the City owes you a greater debt than it will be able to repay.

We wish for you many more years of useful service and with best wishes, I am

Yours very truly,
W. F. Carr
Mayor

The following is a letter from a gentleman, written to me, from Chicago: (1938)

Dear Father O'Brien:

Tempus fugit—or something like that. It is now several years since it was my good fortune to have been in Durham during Holy Week and to have attended the service in that peaceful little church. I have already (back in 1935, when I wrote you a note from San Francisco) mentioned that your Easter Sunday sermon was one of the most inspiring I have ever heard. That still goes.

More of my close friends have passed beyond since then and I would appreciate a Mass being said for them.

My sister

James Hanan

Edward Moran

Trust this finds you in good health, that your 30th anniversary as pastor was a very happy occasion and that your golden jubilee will be even bigger and better.

Sincerely,

EDWARD T. MCGRATH

The address made over the radio by Mr. Clark, who, to my recollection I was not fortunate to meet, was very deeply appreciated. I quote, in full, Mr. Clark's address of some sixteen years ago:

RT. REV. WILLIAM FRANCIS O'BRIEN

by J. B. CLARK

WHEN A MAN so lives that his life becomes an inspiration to others, that man is blessed as few mortals are. Particularly if that man's life is one of spiritual beauty. Few of us devote our time to a perpetual quest of opportunity to serve others. Few of us turn aside when such opportunity is presented, for we are all as good Americans conscious of our obligation one to the other and aware of the strength to be found in unity of action and purpose. But it is rare when one does come upon a citizen who devotes his life to a complete service of others without thought of self. I believe tonight as we salute another splendid citizen of our city that we have found such a person. Certainly, others with whom we have talked speak of him in this manner, and facts of his life,

upon study, support this belief. He is in the work of the church—naturally, therefore, he should be prompted to render constant service to the unfortunate, the bewildered, the perplexed ones of life. But it requires more than theological preparation for success in the ministry. It requires an all-consuming love of one's fellowman to the extent that devotion to duty in helping others supersedes all else. Our citizen is now 69 years of age, having been born on October 18, 1872 in the city of Washington, D. C. For 44 years he has been engaged in the work of spreading a ray of spiritual hope for lost and lonely men in the maelstrom of an ever-confusing world. At the age of 16, after serious contemplation of the duties awaiting him should he enter his profession, he cast aside worldly ambitions and set forth upon the road leading to ordainment and assignment as a worker in the cause of Christianity. He has been in Durham almost 35 years and has instilled himself in the heart of the city as a gentle, kind, and understanding man. The church is his love, of course, but the city in which his church is located shares in this affection. Any civic movement requesting his services has always found him responsive. Back in World War I he was selected as one of the Four-Minute Men in Durham, speaking as one of a group to solidify the citizens behind the government. He was active in the membership solicitation for the Chamber of Commerce 1908; he worked with other civic-minded individuals in raising funds for the building of the much-needed Washington Duke Hotel, and on numerous occasions he has been on panel discussions designed to bring about or to maintain good will among groups holding conscientious convictions. He is broad-minded, thoroughly respectful of the opinion of those who may differ with him, and sympathetic in his treatment of any controversial subject. His intimates admire him for the sincerity of his purpose in carrying forward his work, for his benevolence in his church missions, for a keen intellect and an all-consuming desire to render comfort to the weary and lonely. He works in a garden when he is not in his study and the gentle care he bestows on the troubled humans who go to him for spiritual guidance is manifest in his flowers, growing lovely under his watchful attention. He enjoys music, walking in the sunlight, the smiles of children, and friendship with all whom he meets. Yes, he has a creed for living too—he believes in following any procedure or activity that will increase the love of neighbor and the glory of God. And as for a message which he would deliver to Durham were it possible for him to speak to the entire citizenry at one assembly, he said he would wish for each person only this—the blessing of peace acquired through an ever-

increasing love of God and neighbor. Ladies and gentlemen, WDNC gladly honors as our Citizen of Merit tonight—The Right Reverend William Francis O'Brien of the Catholic faith.

I feel personally indebted to Mr. Dixon of the *Durham Herald* for his article under his weekly column "How Times Do Change" on the occasion of our dedication of our new church in 1956.

Catholics of Durham witnessed an historic step forward in the history of their church this week when, with the clergy from many sections of the state participating in the impressive rites, their new and modern church was dedicated to the service of Gad and man. Their hearts rejoiced over the happy event but it is safe to bet that the happiest person in all the vast assemblage which witnessed it was Msgnr. William F. O'Brien.

It was close to half a century ago when Father O'Brien came here to serve the people of his denomination as priest. His coming was preceded a year previously by the erection of the wooden building which recently was razed to give way for the fine church now in use. He served as priest in charge of the local parish until he assumed the pastor emeritus status a few years ago.

When Father O'Brien was appointed local pastor there were only 110 Catholics in Durham. The growth of the church has been steady.

In his sermon delivered on the recent occasion of the dedication of the new church, Father O'Brien stated that it was in 1868 when North Carolina was established as a vicariate. There were only 700 Catholics in the state. When he came to the state as a boy of 15 years of age in 1888 there were 2,500 Catholics in the state. In 1898, the year Father O'Brien was ordained a priest, there were 3,800 members in North Carolina. The number of Catholics in now approaching 40,000 and Father O'Brien said "The future is very bright and very promising for the increasing growth of Catholicity in North Carolina."

Some of the history of the denomination in Durham is contained in the following paragraph contained in his sermon:

"Since I knew all the priests who came here every six months in the 1870-80's, as well as all the early Catholics, it is a simple matter for me to recall the history of our church in this city. As the old church, recently demolished, was dedicated in 1906—50 years ago—this is our golden jubilee year, and is for us a crowning double feast day. In 1910, when I was collecting funds in Washington and Baltimore for the church here, Cardinal Gibbons said to me that Durham has not been on the map as having any Catholics when he labored in North Carolina between the years of 1868 and

The New Church; Erected and Dedicated 1957

The Interior of The New Church

1872. He remembered well having preached and administered the sacrament of confirmation in Raleigh and Greensboro during those years. The church in Durham is much younger than the churches in Raleigh and Greensboro or many other places in the state. The first Catholic came to Durham in 1871. I met her in 1907 when I was appointed the first resident priest of Durham. I said mass here as early as 1899, in O'Brien on Wilkerson Avenue, about seven years before the construction of the frame church which was torn down only last month. Some Catholics from Lockhaven, Pa., made an effort to colonize a tract of land five miles west of Hillsboro in 1876. This colony was abandoned and a few of those Catholics moved to Durham. William T. O'Brien had moved here from Lynchburg, Va., in 1883, and it was he who built the frame church that stood for 50 years, but finally proved far too small to accommodate the increasing number of converts and Catholics locating in the city."

That the dedication of the new church was a happy occasion for the beloved priest was indicated when, in his sermon, he said "I am grateful to God for sustaining me in my later years to see the erection of this beautiful church, and I rejoice that the bishop and supreme pastor of our souls has come and dedicated this new Immaculate Conception Church of Mary in this our golden jubilee year." The ceremonies were the crowning achievement of years of patient toil and loving, devoted service given by him and the fine new church to many will be considered a symbol of this man's love for his Lord and a monument to him whose life has been so intimately and forcefully a part in the events which made the historic day possible.

Father O'Brien was born in Washington, D. C. on Oct. 18, 1872. His parents moved to Baltimore and then to Fayetteville, Ark. They moved to New Bern in 1888 and young O'Brien entered Belmont College. The next year he was ordained into the priesthood.

The address made at the Pontifical High Mass, by the writer, seemed to be well received from the many congratulations made to me. A letter received from Dr. Alexander Hunter, who died about two years ago, touched me deeply.

DR. ALEX S. HUNTER
DENTIST
DURHAM, N. C.

May 24, 1957

Monseigneur W. F. O'Brien
810 W. Chapel Hill Street
Durham, N. C.

Dear Sir:

Last Monday May 21, my friend Dr. Norman Cordice phoned me extending an invitation to attend with him the dedicatory services of the new Church that evening.

We attended, and I want to extend to you my deepest appreciation and most sincere thanks for the long lasting impression and deep spiritual uplift afforded me on the occasion.

When I say that we have been a practitioner (dental) here since 1909, makes me quite qualified to know of the wonderful contribution you have made to the City in making this a better place in which to live.

Such a constructive and spiritual contribution has not been, and could not be confined to your particular faith or church, no, for your contribution occasioned by Divine Inspiration, and an abiding faith has been a blessing to all mankind.

It must have been a highlight in your life to have lived to see the wonderful growth of the work here, and the sincerity of the theme of your presentation expressed a most sincere thankfulness for having been spared by Providence to take part in the services.

Again thanking you, and with prayers that God may continue to keep and bless you.

Yours very truly,

A. S. HUNTER

I am glad to close my memoirs with my address made during the memorable Solemn High Mass celebrated by Most Reverend Bishop Waters, D.D., our bishop of the diocese of Raleigh.

"I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy House, and the place where Thy Glory dwelleth." (Ps. 25—Verse 8)

The holy Prophet and King, David, cried out, as a penitent, in his distress, that he might come to worship God in His Tabernacle, as if he had seen, in prophetic vision, the beauty of God's House and the place where His Glory dwelleth, in the Church which he founded in the New Law, of which we are members, and which will last to the end of time. In chapter 7, verse 12, of the Second Book of Kings, it is recorded that God made it known to David that when his days would be fulfilled and he should sleep with his fathers, He would raise up from the seed of David, one after him, and that He would establish His kingdom. He shall build a House to my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

This prophesy partly relates to Solomon but much more to Jesus Christ, who is called the Son of David in scripture, and who is the Builder of the true temple, which is the Church, His everlasting kingdom, which shall never fail.

A number of self-appointed religious leaders of this day, speak in vague terms, to religious groups, of the kingdom of God to come on this earth some day, but if there is one true fact that is clearly certain and has been known to be certain, it is that the Kingdom of God is on earth now and has been for the last nearly two thousand years. Speaking to the Jews, even to the Pharisees, and especially to His Apostles, Jesus Christ, Our Lord, often spoke of His kingdom. The Kingdom that Jesus Christ spoke of, was not the Kingdom of Heaven, where the saints of God see Him face to face; He was speaking of His Kingdom of Heaven on earth; He was speaking of His Church on earth. This was clearly implied and understood when He said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a net which a man casts into the sea, and in which he takes up everything, good and bad." It is clear then, the kingdom of heaven which Jesus was speaking of was not the kingdom of heaven above, for there is nothing bad there, but only good. He was speaking of His Church on earth, in which there are both good and bad children; children whom she encourages to be good; children whom she makes sacrifices for; children over whom she weeps, seeking their conversion and their living with God.

We read in the scriptures (III Kings VIII) that Solomon built a magnificent temple for the Lord, the dedication of which he solemnized for two weeks; that this feast was annually observed by

the Jews, and attended by Jesus Christ, Himself, in Jerusalem. (John X—22). The early Christians, in like manner, dedicated their Churches, and solemnly commemorated their dedication every year. St. Jerome makes mention of the consecration of the first Church of Rome built by St. Peter. In the very earliest days of Christianity, on account of persecution, the churches were not solemnly dedicated; but as soon as the persecutions came to an end under the Emperor Constantine, who embraced Christianity about the year A.D. 312, the bishops of the Church caused the dedication of churches to be solemnized with the most imposing ceremonies.

Our Holy Mother, the Church, has selected the Epistle to be read in the Mass on the feasts of dedication of churches. This Epistle, which describes the vision and heavenly inspiration of St. John in the Apocalypse (Apoc. XXI, verses 2-5) was read in the Mass today. The Apostle, St. John, writes: "And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: 'Behold the tabernacle of God with men: and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people: and God Himself with them shall be their God'." Here is a picture of Jesus Christ coming down out of heaven, in heavenly glory, and with the fullest joy of a bride, in the brightness of sanctifying grace, to take possession of His kingdom on earth, the Church which he founded; and to be with His people in a special manner, and in reality, in the Most Excellent Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist; to be with the congregation as their God, and the members of the congregation might be with Jesus Christ as their God. After the Bishops and Pastors of our souls dedicate our Churches, the churches, to their believing and fervent members, become like refreshing oases; to their hearts, minds and souls, in the deserts of this world, they become veritable paradises. In the opening words of the Mass today, the Church uses the words of the Patriarch Jacob: "Terrible is this place: it is the House of God and Gate of Heaven, and shall be called the Court of God." (Gen. XXVIII-17) "How lovely are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord." (Ps. LXXXIII, 2 verse)

When Jesus Christ was about to form His kingdom or His church on earth, He said to His disciples: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?" And they replied: "Some, John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the Prophets." Jesus saith to them: "But whom do you say that I am?" Simon answered and said: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answering, said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona,

because flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father, Who is in heaven. And I say to thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed in heaven." (St. Matthew, chapter 13, verse 19)

The House of God of which the patriarch, Jacob, speaks, the kingdom of God of which St. John speaks, and the Church which Jesus Christ founded upon the believing Peter, are identical.

Peter was told by our Lord to confirm his brethren. He was commissioned to feed both lambs and sheep of His sheepfold of the Church. He presided in the election of Matthias in the place of Judas. After there had been much discussion at the first Council of Jerusalem, in the year A.D. 57, Peter rose up with authority, as the representative of Jesus Christ, and all held their peace. The name of Peter leads the list of all the Apostles, as told by the Evangelists; and also, his name leads the list of the other apostles in the Acts of the Apostles, written by St. Luke. The councils of the Church and the early apologetical writers attest to this. The Council of Ephesus, held in A.D. 431, considered his leadership as "questioned by no one."

In the annals of history, since Jesus Christ founded His Church and the last of the apostles died, where in the nations, where in the provinces, where in the people that have received Christianity, can divinely appointed authority be found, except in the Popes, the lawful successors of St. Peter? Who sent St. Patrick into Ireland in the year A.D. 432? The holy Pope, St. Celestine. Who sent St. Augustine into England in the year A.D. 595? Pope St. Gregory the Great. Who sent St. Boniface into Germany in the year A.D. 722? Pope Gregory the Second. Who sent St. Cyril and St. Methodius among the Slavonian nations in the year 868? Pope St. John the Eighth. "No one can convert unless he has his mission and diploma from Rome." (St. Paul, chapter 10, verse 15) "No man can preach except he has been sent", and the one to send is the visible representative of Jesus Christ and the lawful successor of St. Peter, our Holy Father the Pope. All the Bishops of the universal, Catholic world, of 470 millions of Catholics of the various dioceses of all the nations of the world, have been chosen to be consecrated as bishops and have received their right of extensive jurisdiction from the Pope.

If the Catholic Church was taken out of the world, society would be in a chaotic state, as there would be no power in the world to bring order, inspiration and stability into society. All other religious

bodies are divided, and without the God-appointed and supreme spiritual head so necessary to guide mankind in the way of peace and tranquility as citizens of two worlds—the temporal sovereign state, and the kingdom of God above, our true country, our eternal home. Many religious leaders in the multiple religious bodies do not believe in the divinity of Christ, and they even permit divorced persons in their membership. The Catholic Church is the champion in the Christian world in teaching and upholding the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. Anyone who denies the divinity of Jesus Christ is cut off from the Church. Divorce, basically, is the real cause of juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency has gone beyond the control of civic, ethical and welfare societies in the State. The danger to the State is not the Church, rather, the danger to the continued existence of the State, would be the loss of the Church.

In 1820 there were about a million people in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. In all the territory of 129,000 square miles of these three States, there were only 1,000 Catholics; and North Carolina had fewer Catholics than South Carolina and Georgia together. Bishop England was appointed the first bishop of these three States and resided at Charleston, South Carolina. In 1820, he had only two priests to assist him in his apostolic labors and in the jurisdiction of this extensive territory. In 1868, North Carolina was established as a Vicariate, with separate jurisdiction from Charleston; and Bishop Gibbons was the first Vicar-Apostolic and bishop of North Carolina. There were 700 Catholics in the State in 1868, and Bishop Gibbons had only two priests to assist him. Bishop Gibbons was made Archbishop of Baltimore in 1877, and Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore in 1886. I was confirmed by him in Baltimore before he became Cardinal. In 1888, when I came to North Carolina as a boy fifteen years of age, there were 2500 Catholics in the State. In 1898 when I was ordained a priest, there were 3800 Catholics in the entire State. There were only five Secular priests laboring in the State in 1898, and I became the sixth Priest. North Carolina was made a diocese in 1924. At the present time there are about one hundred Secular priests and about sixty-five priests of the Religious Orders and Communities working in the State, with fifty Seminarians preparing to be priests in North Carolina. The number of Catholics is now approaching the figure of forty thousand (40,000). The future is very bright and very promising for the increasing growth of Catholicity in North Carolina.

Since I knew all the priests who came here every six months in the 1870-80's, as well as all the early Catholics, it is a simple matter for me to recall the history of the Church in this city. As

the old church, recently demolished, was dedicated in 1906—fifty years ago—this is our Golden Jubilee year, and is for us a crowning and double Feast Day. In 1910, when I was collecting funds in Washington and Baltimore for the Church here, Cardinal Gibbons said to me that Durham had not been on the map as having any Catholics, when he had labored in North Carolina between the years of 1868 and 1872. He remembered well having preached and administered the sacrament of Confirmation in Raleigh and Greensboro during those years. The Church in Durham is much younger than the Churches in Raleigh or Greensboro or many other places in the State. The first Catholic came to Durham in 1871. I met her in 1907 when I was appointed the first resident priest of Durham. I said Mass here as early as 1899, in the residence of William T. O'Brien on Wilkerson Avenue, about seven years before the construction of the frame church which was torn down only last month. Some Catholics from Lockhaven, Pennsylvania, made an effort to colonize a tract of land, five miles west of Hillsboro, in 1876. This colony was abandoned and a few of these Catholics moved to Durham. William T. O'Brien had moved here from Lynchburg, Virginia, in 1883, and it was he who built the frame church that stood for fifty years, but that finally proved far too small to accommodate the increasing number of converts and Catholics locating in the city.

I am grateful to God for sustaining me in my later years to see the erection of this beautiful church, and I rejoice that the Bishop and Supreme Pastor of our souls has come and dedicated this new Immaculate Conception Church of Mary, in this our Golden Jubilee year. It is to the everlasting credit of Father Charles O'Connor, your Pastor, and of you, the members of this Immaculate Conception parish of Durham, who have cooperated with him in your generosity of spirit, that the construction of this beautiful church was made possible—a Church which will be so satisfying and devotional to you, and which is also a contribution by you, as citizens, to the civic beauty of your city. Congratulations are also due to Mr. Latimer, the architect, for designing this beautiful edifice; and to Mr. George Kane, the contractor, and his able assistants, for the splendid workmanship and finish of this church building, which has now become to us a "House of God and Gate of Heaven."

In conclusion, let me say, there is one more occasion which I should like to see, God willing, and which with the Bishop's consent, I should like to add to the sweet memories of my past Priesthood. That occasion is the consecration of this magnificent church, dedicated to Mary. Before a church may be consecrated, it must

be free of debt. In our struggles here in the past, we had the edification to know that our benefactor, Mr. William T. O'Brien, built and paid for the old first church where the Holy Sacrifice was offered up for fifty years, before he would think of building a house for himself and his family. This is the tradtiion that you, dearly beloved members of this Parish, have inherited from the past. True to this noble tradition, we will be zealous to resolve to offer up, as a gift, this House of God and Gate of Heaven, to Mary and her Son, free from all encumbrances. Then we can say devoutly, both as a united congregation and individually, with our whole souls, minds and hearts: "I have loved, O Lord, the beauty of Thy house and place where Thy glory dwelleth."

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.